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Revenge of Evil Gods

Book of Gods

Chapter 1 – The Beginning of a Dark History

[1]

I've heard a saying before about how it's easier to destroy something than create.

It's a somewhat paradoxical saying that emphasises the difficult of creating things.

Whether it's buildings, or artwork, or culture, when you create something, a lot of time and effort is needed to do so.

But if I had to add one more line to that—

—it would be that cleaning up after things that you accidentally create are also quite a pain. Including bad things that you've accidentally done.

And if I had to add one more line on top of that—

—it would be that if you leave it to somebody else because cleaning up is a pain, there also exists the fear of things getting worse.

The newly erected temple, the Forteran Army that was driven away, the Evil God Followers who ended up saved because of this, and more than anything else, I myself, who had become an Evil God.

There were so many problems that I didn't even know where to begin, so I decided to create a rough order of precedence, and allocate people wherever I could. There shouldn't be anything wrong with this line of thinking.

And to me, the point of highest priority was dealing with the fact that I'd become an evil god, and all other matters were lower. Considering this once again, I still think this was correct.

So that's why. That's why...

"As our great god's—Anri-sama's, servant, I, Pope Harvin, hereby

declare, the establishment of the 『Holy Anri Thearchy』!”

I want to believe that this isn't my fault.

Also, I'd like for you to stop with that name. Very much so.



The Evil God Followers were taken in on the first surface floor of the temple, and I left their care to Tena and Leonora. Having said that though, I had no intention of worrying as far as the minor details, and the fundamental idea was to have them arrange themselves.

“And so, why did it turn into *this*?”

“Even if you ask me that... you know?”

“I just passed on the message, 『Gather your followers over there.』 exactly as you said, Anri-sama, but...”

After Tena and Leonora returned to the top floor of the temple, they told me about the details regarding the speech that the Merry Founder—now, the Merry Pope, gave beyond the monitor, but apparently Tena just passed on the message as is. So how did it have anything to do with founding a country...?

“You'll probably need to ask him yourself... But whatever the reason, now that he's declared as such, you can't so easily take it back, you know.”

“I know.”

What's more, although we declared that we were creating a country, in the end our situation was just that of insisting that it was true. There's the fact that we weren't being acknowledged by other countries as well, but that was because we hadn't created a country yet. We were just a temple sheltering 1000 refugees, without even a single house, so of course it that much was natural.

But since that announcement had already been accepted by the followers, it was too late to say otherwise.

Of course, I could use my position as God to force the decision to

withdraw the announcement, but once I considered the chaos that would ensue, I couldn't so easily take the plunge.

"Why do they know my name?"

"They begged me, 『Please, please tell us!』 so I ended up telling them, but... was that no good?"

I replied to Tena's worried question with a shake of the head.

There was the fact that I hadn't forbidden her to do so as well, and since there was the benefit of being more famous and familiar amongst the followers, I had no intention of criticising her. Because right after that announcement, my belly felt full. At the time I didn't know what was going on and fell into confusion, but apparently, because the announcement had made my name known, the effectiveness of their faith ended up rising, or so I concluded later on.

Having become a member of the Divine Race, I didn't need to eat, drink, or use the bathroom any more, but in exchange, how full I felt apparently depended on the religious faith that the people of this world had towards me. I guess that's how it ended up.

Right now I had faith, so I was happy with a full stomach, but if the faith towards me dropped too much, then I'd be stuck with feeling hungry. Not only that, even eating food wouldn't fill that hunger, so until the faith towards me restored, I'd continue to starve...

Considering this, forming a country might be convenient for me; mostly in the sense that keeping myself famous would fill my stomach. Although, far from solving any problems, the fact that problems had just increased gave me a headache, and I'm worried about the reactions of the other countries too.

I wish is to live peacefully, but I don't want to suffer and starve either. The ideal would be to maintain a deadlock where I'd preserve just enough faith, while not being invaded by any countries.

Having said that though, just being the Evil God Country would be famous enough, so...

"At least change the name."

"Why? Isn't it a fine name?"

“I think so too. And furthermore, the name is already well-known amongst the followers, and so, changing it now would be...”

It's damned embarrassing. Embarrassing enough to roll about in agony on my bed.

Also, why is an evil god-worshipping country prefixed with 'Holy'? I seriously want to know.

“It isn't just the followers, you know. That guy has already sent out letters to every nation, after all.”

Why the heck is he so needlessly proactive!? If it's already spread that far, isn't it impossible to change now!?

Letting that country name become known across the land, what kind of shame torture is this?

No, wait, wait, thinking about it carefully, there's a more important issue.

Isn't sending something like “We created the nation of the Evil God” to every nation basically the same as a declaration of war?

And in a situation where far from being a “nation”, we're not even a “village” yet?

“Every country is going to come attack us.”

“Although you can't let your guard down, for now you'll be fine.”

I asked Leonora ‘Why?’ with my gaze and... she averted her eyes. Although I've become a divine now, my mystic eyes are still in good health. I'm just glad that they haven't gotten worse though.

“The country right beside ours is the Kingdom of Fortera. Considering what happened the other day, they'll probably be cautious about invading.”

Well, I certainly did threaten the Forteran Army quite terribly. I guess they won't invade right this second. Having said that though, just as Leonora said, I can't let my guard down and it's just a matter of time.

“For now, tell them that they can use the first three terrarean floors, Tena. Also, I'll leave the management of the country to that Pope.”

“Yes, Anri-sama. I understand.”

Although I’m worried about choosing the Pope, incredibly worried about choosing the Pope... he was apparently the peacemaker in the cult, and there was no reason to change it. Moreover, I couldn’t think of anybody else for the job.

Incidentally, I’m using the 5th and top layer as another residence, and prepared rooms for Tena and Leonora as well. As for Lili, she’s still too young to be on her own, so she’s sharing a room with Tena. However, Tena became busy recently, so I’ve been looking after Lili a lot of the time. Perhaps that had some effect, because as long as I didn’t meet her in the eyes, she’d seem pretty attached to me. I’m a little moved.

The 4th floor is serving as a line of defence. But the actual stronghold is on the subterranean 31st floor, so it’s fine even if I abandon this place when the time comes.

The dungeon core is still on the 31st floor, and I put a newly divided subcore on the 5th surface floor. In exchange for having a number of its functions sealed, like the ability to add floors, with the subcore I could check for abnormalities in the dungeon even without being on the 31st floor. Only, it didn’t function as a backup, and if the main dungeon core was destroyed, then the subcore would break as well.

I hadn’t really decided on what to do with the 3rd surface floor and below, so I offered it for use by the management of the country. With this place as the base, they’ll probably clear the land around the temple and build a town. Only, I don’t really know much about that, so I left it all to somebody else. While I was at it, I pushed all the exchanges with the Merry Pope to Tena. No, I mean, I *am* sorry to Tena, but once I think about that guy’s vigour, I’m afraid of meeting him directly.

Incidentally, although they’re surface floors, they’re still part of the dungeon. I made it so that monsters wouldn’t spawn, but I couldn’t stop the miasma. Only, unlike the floors underground, it was open here, so I dealt with the problem by blowing it outside.

“Speaking of which, is it really fine for you to stay here, Leonora?”

We’d stopped the conversation so that I could tell Tena to give

instructions to the Pope, but I suddenly had that wonder, and so I asked her.

She's helped me with a lot of things, but thinking about it carefully, isn't it bad to be receiving "aid from another country"?

"Yeah, no problems. My country is focused on this place as well, you see. They want know what's going on. In exchange for letting me stay here for a while, I'll help out."

"...Thanks."

When I thanked her, Leonora combed her hands through her beautiful silver hair, as her face turned a little red, and she looked away.

"I-, It isn't really anything to thank me for. They're orders from my country, right? I'm something like a spy, you know."

If you were seriously stealing information, there'd be no need for you to tell me; would pointing this out to her be boorish?

It was obvious that she was worrying about me.

"S-, Speaking of which, have you grasped the effects of becoming an evil god?"

"About half of it."

In exchange for not needing to eat, excrete, or sleep, I experienced the fact that I apparently needed faith. I don't know about my lifespan, but since I'm a divine, I'm probably immortal. My mana and skills and stuff all went up across the board.

Also, although I didn't need to eat or sleep, it didn't mean that I couldn't, so I hadn't changed my lifestyle rhythm. I want to continue living life like a person to maintain my mental stability, after all. By no means is it because I won't get fat no matter how much I eat or sleep.

I was scared about what would happen if I used my power as an Administrator, so I hadn't tried it yet.

"Also, I can change my clothes now."

"Hah?"

Even with curses on the tantou or robe, since I had become a divine myself, I had overcome them. But it wasn't like the curses themselves had been dispelled, so I guess it would be more correct to say that even cursed, I alone could equip or remove them. When I told her this, Leonora replied...

"Sorry to say this while you're happy about it, but you've already become recognised as wearing those clothes. If you change too often, it'll cause trouble."

"Why?"

"Well, even if you ask why, if God kept changing their clothing, it'd be unnatural, right?"

...Certainly, I've never heard of a god who changes their clothing all the time.

Even when it comes to statues or whatever, it's normal that they wear the same outfit.

Even though I'd finally been able to change... It seems that I'll forever have nothing to do with fashion.

Is this also the curse of the Evil God?

Notes

1. 黒歴史 (kurorekishi), known as dark history or black history, refers to the incredibly embarrassing shit that happened to you in the past.
Like when you ran around pretending to be Naruto in 8th grade, or when you were **so** into death metal in 9th grade.
Or the time you started a dancing blog and uploaded videos of your own choreography(lol).

Of course, being an Evil God, there's obviously the meaning at face value too.

Chapter 2 – The Situation in Various Countries

『Well then, please tell us the situation in all the other countries.』

On the monitor, Tena called out to the people assembled there. Sitting around the round table were the important members of the Faith, and of course, the Merry Pope was there as well.

Ever since the country-founding announcement, I sent people out to see how the other countries would move, and the information they gathered was to be presented at this meeting.

As for being there myself, with Tena already recognised as my representative, I left it to her and instead decided to watch on-screen from the top floor of the temple. Also, Lili was sitting next to me, reading a picture book and studying letters. In this world where the literacy rate and printing techniques were oddly high for a medieval European level, learning how to read was indispensable.

Tena sat on a special chair that was placed at the highest part behind the round table, and overlooked everybody gathered there. Just like how my appearance didn't change when I became a divine, Tena's appearance didn't change either when she became an apostle, but for some reason I get the feeling that she was now wrapped in a kind of transcendental atmosphere.

With beautiful blonde hair, a youthful but dignified face, as well as the black outfit with the mysterious atmosphere, it was like she was a princess or a shrine maiden from somewhere. Well, I guess she's exactly a shrine maiden.

『Well then, I shall begin. In regards to the movements of the Headquarters of the Church of Sacred Light, the Luxiria Theocracy, they immediately repudiated the announcement of our country's founding. They are appealing to the other nations to agree.』

A commotion ran through the meeting due to the sudden report.

『Calm yourselves. Anri-sama is watching us as well.』

The Pope's voice rang out through the noisy room, and the noise changed to complete silence.

Well yeah, I am watching, but there's no need to say it.

『We knew from the beginning that this was how the Luxiria Theocracy would act. The issue is how the other nations will respond. How do things proceed on that front?』

A woman raised her hand at the Pope's question.

『In regards to that, I will give the first report.』

『You're... As I recall, the one in charge of the Kingdom of Fortera, weren't you.』

『Yes.』

The Kingdom of Fortera was the nation that originally owned the place that we were in, and as somebody who was a stakeholder, you could say that they were the most important nation to us. I was very curious to know what news the report held.

『The Kingdom of Fortera rejected Luxiria's appeal. Furthermore, they raised complaints about the dishonesty of the current upper echelons of the Church, and created a new faction, taking a hostile position towards them. Furthermore, in regards to our country's founding announcement, they did not negate it, and are taking a neutral position.』

The meeting became even more noisy than before.

The Church of Sacred Light was the official religion for all nations in the Human Territory, and this was the first time in history that anybody had opposed it, so a commotion was natural. No, perhaps forming a new faction isn't actually defying the Church of Sacred Light itself.

『The name of the new faction is called the Origin Faction, and are based on being faithful to the teachings of the Goddess.』

『What reaction did the Luxiria Theocracy have towards Fortera's

declaration?』

『Their Pope stated his own feelings of regret, and they seek a withdrawal of that decision.』

When the Pope received the woman's report, and asked that question of the man who first gave the report on Luxiria, he received a reply that you could say was natural. But if they were going to withdraw that decision, they wouldn't have made it to begin with, so it was already decided that the two would be hostile.

『The other nations also appear to be watching the confrontation between Luxiria and Fortera, and things are in a deadlock.』

Still, I wonder what's going on.

From Fortera's point of view, our country—we're a self-proclaimed country, but—our country had stolen their land and declared ourselves a nation, so Fortera should have been the first person to deny us. That's what I expected as well.

And the result was that they were taking a neutral stand, and taking a hostile position with the headquarters of the Church as well. I don't understand why they would take a hostile position with the Luxiria Theocracy before taking one with us.

"Has the situation progressed?"

When I turned around towards the voice that called out to me, I found the person who should have been in the Demon Territory gathering information, Leonora. The moment I turned to look at her, she averted her eyes. It was an very smooth motion... She's gotten used to it, hasn't she.

"Welcome back."

"Thanks. I just got back."

For information in the Human Territory, I can sort of leave it to the Pope and the others, but as you'd expect, that wouldn't fly in the Demon Territory. Since we're right in-between both territories, I can't neglect the Demon Territory either. Because of that, I asked Leonora to gather information there. As you'd expected, I don't think she'll tell me anything disadvantageous to her country, but we're not hostile to

the Demon Territory or anything, so just normal information is plenty. Right, and I should see what Leonora thinks about the information from just now. She *is* royalty, so she might know what a country is planning. I'm worried about the fact that she's a muscle-head though.



“I see...”

The discussion was still continuing, but since I heard the most important parts, I decided to take a break and discuss the situation with Leonora over tea. She crossed her arms, and sank into thought for a while. While patting Lili who was next to me, looking at the sweet bun with glittering eyes, I waited for Leonora to gather her thoughts.

“Hmm, three things come to mind.”

“What are they?”

Leonora really is reliable. I'm sorry for thinking that you were a muscle-head.

“The first is that they're very simply afraid of you.”

“...”

I was stupid for praising you. No, well, I certainly do think that they're scared of me, and as a guess that probably isn't wrong, but it was a pretty disappointing answer considering how much I was looking forward to it. While I was laying down on the table, Lili pat my head with her small palms. What a good girl.

“The second is that the Fortera and the upper echelons of the Church of Sacred Light had some kind of discord to begin with.”

“Discord?”

“Yeah. Earlier when the Forteran Army invaded, I told you, 『If a problem within their country is dealt with by the Church or the Order, they will come to owe them a favour.』 didn't I? In other words, the

Church of Sacred Light knew that it would come to that, and yet they still tried to form the Order of the Sacred Light. It might be that they simply put precedence over opposing the Evil God, but there's also the possibility that they had some kind of discord with Fortera."

"In other words, forming the Order of the Sacred Light was to put pressure on Fortera?"

"It's nothing but conjecture, but yes."

I see. Then if we take that as the truth, then certainly it does seem reasonable that the Kingdom and Theocracy would be quarrelling.

"The third is... the relationship with the Demon Territory."

"...?"

What kind of relationship would that be?

Seeing me tilt my head just a little, Leonora continued to speak.

"Even within the Kingdom of Fortera, this spot is the closest to the Demon Territory. Fortera is the frontline against the Demon Territory, but if a country appears here, that situation will change. It wouldn't be strange for them to determine that there are large merits for losing just a small amount of territory."

"That's..."

In other words, using us as a shield against the Demon Territory?

If they did that, then it would certainly explain their neutrality towards us. If they want to use us as a shield, then it wouldn't be good to have either an antagonist, nor a friendly relationship. The former would just make a new enemy in place of the Demon Territory, and the latter would mean that they wouldn't be able to push us to the enemy.

And by taking a neutral stance with the Evil God Nation—as long as they weren't choosing to become our enemy, they would necessarily worsen their relationship with the Church of Sacred Light. And it was because they knew this in advance, that they revolted against the Luxiria Theocracy. That kind of thing?

"Both are possible, and it isn't the case that there can be only one

reason either, after all. It might have surprisingly been the result of all three reasons combined.”

That might be it.

For now, the fact that the most likely enemy Fortera, had now fallen into a deadlock with Luxiria was something very convenient for us. We should work to fix our appearance as a nation while we still can.

“Speaking of which, what about the Demon Territory?”

“Ahh, they’re basically just watching. As the Demon Race, they aren’t fond of the ‘Evil God’, but that was because it was an idea used by humanity to demonise our Dark God. As a completely different person to the Dark God, there’s no reason to be hostile to you. If it seems that through me, they can come to a mutual understanding with you, they’ll probably be keeping this kind of relationship for the near future.”

“I see.”

I felt relieved after hearing that.

At the very least, it seems that for now, I’ll be able to concentrate on the problems in the Human Territory.

Feeling full, I rubbed my drowsy eyes while patting Lili on the head, and let out a sigh of relief.



『I suppose that just about sums up the situation in the other countries, and the management of our own. Finally, there is one thing that I would like you to convey to Anri-sama for me, Tena-sama.』

『What is it?』

Mn?

It seems that they wrapped up all the complicated stuff while I was resting, but the Pope began talking about something.

『The truth is, I have thought of a plan to make Anri-sama’s splendour known to the other countries as well. I would by all means like to

verify the details with Anri-sama.』

What is he planning...?

I'm worried. Terribly worried.

Chapter 3 - Progression of Heresy

『In the beginning, Anri-sama created the world.

Humans, animals, plants; all things that exist were created by Anri-sama's hand.

However, the foolish humans did not know.

Sophia the Evil God was jealous of Anri-sama, and pretended that Anri-sama's achievements were her own, and the people praised Evil God Sophia.

Anri-sama who lamented over the world dyed in heresy, decided that she would purge the world with only her believers remaining.

The believers of Evil God Sophia will surely burn in Hell for eternity.

Only those who believe in Anri-sama will be able to go to the new world, and obtain eternal happiness.』

After reading the words on the paper in my hand, I looked up and found that the Pope was standing there with eyes shining with some kind of expectation. Seeing that subtly proud face, the fact that his good looks were its only redeeming feature kind of pissed me off.

“...Leonora.”

“Yeah.”

Faiya~

“NOOOOOOH———!?”

Leonora was standing next to me and had been peering in on it as well, and when I had her burn it away the Pope began to scream.

I didn't want to meet him so I had Tena act as my representative, but he specifically wanted me to have a look at something, so I even went out of my way to build an audience hall on the 4th floor, but I didn't think that I'd be made to read something like that. The reason I added this hall was because they were treating me as a god, so I couldn't easily head down to the 3rd floor and below, and since I didn't want to invite him up to the 5th floor, there was no other place

but the 4th.

Also, the reason I didn't want to call him up to the 5th floor was because I didn't want him to meet Lili. In his mind, Lili had been eaten by me, and as for Lili, she shouldn't want to meet somebody who tried to kill her either.

Only, although I know that he's somebody who tried to kill a person I'm close to, mysteriously I didn't feel any sense of repulsion. I think it's because his personality is so intense that the first impression was drowned out.

I wonder how Tena feels about this. She associates with him normally though.

"Why, Anri-sama————!?"

"Uwah—"

The Pope drew in with a flood of tears, and in my revulsion, I accidentally sent him flying with a shadow bullet. It was so sudden that I didn't hold back on my strength, or so I was thinking, but the Pope was just fine and immediately got up. I shouldn't be one to say this, but is guy really human?

To begin with, these eyes that even cause the daughter of the Demon King to dogeza don't seem to have any effect on him... Or rather, should I say that he even gets a little excited? It makes me want to avert my eyes myself.

"My apologies, I lost my composure. I am terribly ashamed, but could you please teach me what it was that was unsatisfactory?"

Even if you act all prim and proper now, it's too late you know.

And even if you ask me what was unsatisfactory, it's actually harder to point out something good about it. It's the first time that something's been so bad, that one of the less bad points is a good point. But well, if I had to pick the worst point, then...

"It's needlessly antagonistic. And there are lots of parts that are disconnected from the truth."

Even without antagonising them, the Church of Sacred Light might be hostile anyway, but that doesn't mean that there's a need to needlessly stir them up. We're lucky enough that they're glaring at

another country, so I don't want to provoke them and have their spearhead turned this way instead. And also, why did I end up the one who created the world? I have no memory of doing anything like that.

"Certainly, there are a few exaggerations mixed in."

A few? So this is 'a few'...

Or rather, before 'exaggeration', all I found were a bag of lies, but?

"However, we presently require something to gather people to our country. As such, I wanted to create a scripture. In order to draw interest, giving it a little impact would be better, wouldn't it?"

Please give me a break. Just imagining a nation formed from people gathered by that kind of scripture is giving me goosebumps.

But in regards to the need for scriptures, I guess I can't help but agree with his idea. I don't want to starve either, so the idea of propagating the religion itself is something I agree with. Then in that case...

"I'll write the scriptures."



I might have been too hasty.

The blank paper in front of me was causing me to hold my head in trouble inside.

I accidentally said in front of the Pope that I would write it—the Pope gleefully left—but, since then the brush in my hand has written absolutely nothing.

To begin with, I only realised just now that there's no way the deity themselves would write the parts that worshipped and praised the deity, but it's much too late.

And also, even leaving that part aside, the rest of the contents are difficult too.

Amongst the believers gathered in the temple right now, many of them were in despair because of the Church of Sacred Light, or the social class system. Because of that, I needed to write something

revolutionary and reformist like destroying the current system, but in that case, I'd had no choice but to write something antagonistic towards the Church or the other countries.

And personally, just as I said earlier, I definitely don't want to antagonise the Church of Sacred Light or the other nations, so as much as possible I'd like to head in a direction that doesn't provoke them.

"Anri-sama? Are you still awake?"

"Tena..."

When I sighed at how I was making no progress at all, I heard somebody call me from outside the room. Apparently after Tena had put Lili to bed, she came to see how I was doing.

"Overly exerting yourself is bad for your body, Anri-sama. I think it might be better if you went to bed..."

"It's fine. You can go to bed, Tena."

"Anri-sama..."

It wasn't a lie. I'm still totally fine. For some reason after I turned into a divine, I stopped needing sleep. Staying up a few nights won't hurt my health at all. It's completely unrelated to physical fatigue.

"If you don't plan on sleeping yet, then could I trouble you for some tea?"

"Understood."

I know that as an apostle, Tena still needs to eat and sleep. Because of that, unlike me, she needs to properly rest. I'm happy that she's worried about me, but she needs to rest after she's done with the tea.

After she left a cup of tea in front of me, I was going to tell her to go to sleep, but before I could, Tena spoke to me first.

"Are you not making progress?"

Perhaps realising that I was troubled, Tena asked me that, and I

noded wordlessly. A situation where you keep crumpling up the pages and starting over can't be called progress no matter how you look at it.

"What are you worrying about?"

"I can't write something that endorses reform without picking a fight with the Church or existing countries."

After saying it myself, the impossible requirements made my head hurt. The moment that you reform something, you'd be picking a fight with the people who currently had benefits, so to begin with it was contradictory.

"Umm, why is it that reform is necessary?"

"Why, you say? Well..."

'Because that's what the followers want.' I was about to reply, when my mind suddenly came to a stop.

Is that really true?

It's certain that there were lots of people amongst the followers that were in despair because of the Church or the class system. But if you asked me if all members wanted reform, then I would have to say that I hadn't heard such a thing.

What the betrayed and wounded wanted was something more vague than that; 'something righteous'. If that wasn't true, then even without religion, they'd rely on something else in some other place.

And as for 'something righteous', there was no need to forcefully link it to reform. From the beginning, there was no need to touch on troublesome topics like the current state of the religions or countries in the world. As long as I state ethics or morals; state 'the way things should be', then that's enough.

It felt like a ray of light shone into my mind that had been hazy from agonising over this.

"It looks like you're fine now. It wouldn't do for me to be a nuisance, so I'll take my leave."

Perhaps feeling relieved because she saw that I was fine, Tena gave a bow with a smile. I nodded back at her.

“Goodnight, Tena. And... thanks.”

“Good night, Anri-sama.”

Right. There was no need for me to put on airs.

In the end, the scriptures were just the basis, and not the entirety. You could tell this just by looking at the way the Church of Sacred Light spread. It’s fine just for me to write whatever I think. The religious stuff can just be left to the Pope and the rest to add on.

Mn. It feels like I can write now.

Pulling myself together, I turned to the page and began putting down my thoughts into words.

<The Black Scripture>

An item designated as an ‘S-Class Danger’.

Said to be filled with the malice of the Evil God, amongst the things in this world, it is a cursed item of particularly great strength.

Those who have received this item will continue to suffer misfortune until they transcribe a copy and hand it to somebody else. Additionally, as even the copy contains the curse, it will propagate endlessly.

Additionally, there is no means of destroying this item.

A list of the misfortunes of the cursed lett... I mean, the “Black Scripture”:

You suffer a bald patch.

You experience “popping ears” when heading to high places.

It feels like somebody is pressing a finger between your eyebrows.

You contract hay fever.

You will suddenly suffer stomach pains in places where there are no nearby toilets.

Each morning you will awaken to a leg cramp.

You will unfailingly stub your little toe on a shelf.

You will unconsciously blurt out your real opinion.

You will end all your sentences in ‘evilgod’.

Notes

1. There's a superstition that the area between your eyebrows is particularly sensitive and pressing a finger or stick there will especially hurt.

Chapter 4 – Light and Dark

When I joined the Divine Race I conquered the curse, and so I was able to take long baths again.

Up until now the curse would activate if I didn't leave the bath before thirty minutes was up and send my clothes flying into the bath, so I always had to bathe while watching the time. Now I could finally bathe as long as I wanted.

Although I stopped sweating, I still got dirty, so I would usually bathe every day. More important than anything was the fact that getting into a hot bath was relaxing for the spirit, so it was essential that I did so.

“Phew...”

Feeling the heat soak into my body, I unconsciously let out a sigh. After pouring some water on myself, I dropped into the bath. Waves went through the bath, and the comfortable vibrations swayed my body.

I played around like that for a while, but because I had already been in for an hour, although I didn't get dizzy I still thought that it was about time to get out, so I stood up.

And when I did, a man in a crimson robe suddenly appeared outside the bathtub without any warning.

He was a tall man with long, light green hair, and although he had a handsome face, he looked somewhat ill-bred.

“Ahn?”

It was so shocking that I had forgotten to even hide myself and stood there stock still. In front of me, the man looked around the room, before finally noticing me.

“ ... ”

“ ... ”

We continued to stare at each other wordlessly for a while, but the

man finally lowered his gaze just a little, before averting his eyes with a scoff.

Still silent, I fired a relatively serious shadow bullet at the man.



After preparing an emergency meeting room and round table on the 5th floor, I sat down on one of the three chairs. The other chairs were occupied by the peeper who intruded on my bath earlier, and a blonde woman wearing a full set of silver armour. Incidentally, although the man took my relatively serious shadow bullet, he was left without a scratch.

Tena walked around the table and placed a cup of tea before each of us.

“Thanks. We’re fine now, so you can leave. Also, tell everyone not to come near this room.”

“Y-, Yes! Understood.”

Perhaps I accidentally let some of my urgency into my voice, because Tena leapt out of the room with great urgency.

I felt a little guilty, but considering the situation, it couldn’t help that I was nervous.

Not even in my dreams had I imagined that the 『God of Darkness』 and the 『God of Light』 would march in here directly together.

The man sitting to me left in a deep crimson sleeveless robe had introduced himself as Dark God Anbaal.

Whether his long green hair, or the bared chest beneath his robe, his appearance just made him look like a member of a visual kei rock band, but because of his bad attitude, crossing his legs on the table, I couldn’t see him as anything but a hoodlum.

He saw me naked in the bath. He looked at my chest and sneered. I already had a pretty bad impression of him. When I considered that this was the deity that they worshipped, I began feeling sympathy for the Demon Race. I’ll make sure to warn Leonora later not to be hasty.

But the feeling of pressure I was feeling was the real thing, so I had no doubts that he was a god. He was the god that ruled over “darkness” so considering the attribute of my shadow bullet, it made sense that he was unharmed.

On the other hand, the armoured woman sitting to my left who appeared in the bathroom to scold the Dark God for intruding introduced herself as the God of Light Sophia.

Her beautiful blonde hair was tied into three braids, and from her appearance she looked like a calm woman in her twenties, giving off a clean and serious atmosphere... but there’s one thing I’d like to say.

Her appearance was way too different to the statue in the church; it’s fraud.

If something like this is allowed, wouldn’t it be fine for me to change my clothes too?

I only saw it from afar, but I think the goddess statue in the church was wearing something like a nun’s clothing. And in contrast, the woman in front of me was wearing a silver plate armour without a single gap, and no matter how you looked at it, she seemed like the martial type. She was like Joan of Arc. The fact that the person herself was quiet made things scarier instead.

Honestly speaking, I was less afraid of the hoodlum Dark God than I was of her. She didn’t seem the type who understood jokes, after all.

In contrast, the Dark God was just acting tough and wasn’t all that scary.

When I turned my gaze to him, perhaps he noticed my gaze because he looked my way.

“The hell you lookin’ at?”

“A peeper.”

Ah-, oops. I accidentally spoke my mind.

“Hah! You think you have anything worth peeping at?”

“That thin body and...” he said, before wordlessly looking at my

chest. I reflexively wanted to cover up with my hands, but I felt like I would be the loser if I faltered here, so I just boldly glared back at him. But of course, perhaps I should be saying 'as expected of a god' because the mystic eyes had no effect at all, and he didn't even flinch.

"To begin with, the heck is a god even doing in the bath?"

When I glared at him, he blocked my eyes like it was annoying, and said that. Well certainly I don't have a metabolism, but that doesn't mean that I don't get dirty, so I thought it was obvious that I'd clean myself but... Do gods normally not bathe?

I mean, I'm fine with this peeper skipping his bathes or whatever he wants as long as he doesn't come near me, but if gods don't bathe, then could it be that she also...

"Anbaal, it seems she still hasn't been released from a physical body. It's natural that she needs to clean herself. Don't think of her as the same as you and I who exist only as souls."

The Light God cut into the conversation as though scolding the Dark God. And at the same time, she glared at me with an incredible glint in her eyes. Could it be that she knew what I was thinking about? Understood, Oneesama, you aren't unclean.

"A brat with her shell still stuck to her arse, huh? Tsk, how annoying."

The Dark God gave a languid sigh as though saying 'my my'.

But still, I wonder what they meant. If I take the Light God's words at face value, then these two were just spiritual beings without a body. Seeing them sitting on chairs and drinking tea made it a little hard to believe, but since there wasn't any need for them to lie here, it was probably the truth.

But in that case, what kind of position did that put *me* in?

"If there's anything you would like to ask, then I shall answer. Before we get into the main topic, it seems that you need to be informed of some background information first."

"Guess it can't be helped, ey. We aren't getting anywhere at this rate."

The Light God spoke to me who was having questions. I'm concerned about what her 'main topic' is, but for now I'll obediently ask my questions. It's dangerous to get into a conversation with people whose motives you don't know, but because I had so little information, I wasn't in a position where I could form any strategies.

"What's the difference between you two and I?"

I decided just to ask what I had doubts about just now.

"We are all the same in that we belong to the Divine Race. However, because the ones formed from the divided Creator God, Anbaal and I, were divines to begin with, we were always souls without physical bodies. And in contrast, because you were somebody who became a divine from a human, you still possess your body. Once your soul becomes a divine, your body will be affected as well though, so it isn't as though your body is the same as when you were a human though."

"Me and that overly serious woman over usually exist without possessing any substance, but right now we're materialised. But well, once your body is destroyed you'll probably be just like us though."

In other words, right now I'm like a half-baked half-divine with a physical body, but once my physical body is destroyed, I'll be a complete divine just like them? I get the feeling that we just casually skipped through a fairly heavy conversation.

"But well, even if you still have a body, you're still a divine, so there shouldn't be any problems with exercising your powers."

"Exercising my powers?"

Could it be that she's talking about the 'Administrator' skill that came along when I became a divine? I can't think of anything else that matches, so I think that's probably it, though.

"Yeah. That's the 'main topic' that we came aaaall the way here to talk to ya about."

The Dark God pulled his legs back from atop the table, and after

fixing his posture, he put his crossed arms atop the table and leaned in. The sense of tension in the room surged up.

“Today the reason we came here... is to decide on our 『Authorities』.”

Chapter 5 – The Meeting Unfolds

“『Authorities』 are things that we Administrators govern... there are 『Authorities』 for all things, phenomena and concepts. And to us, the 『Authorities』 are our 『power』, 『responsibility』 and 『duty』.”

“Each Administrator has a main 『Authority』 with a bunch of 『Sub-Authorities』, as well as 『Free-Authorities』 that don't belong to any, so that makes up all three types.”

The gods of Light and Dark explained to me about the 『Authorities』 that were their main reason for visiting me. I wanted to take down notes, but it wasn't the right atmosphere for that, so I decided to try my best to memorise it.

“An Administrator's main 『Authority』 can't be changed 'cause of their attribute. I'm 『Dark』, that overly serious woman over there is 『Light』, and as for you... Seriously? 『Fear』? That's a pretty nasty one you've chosen, ey?”

I didn't choose it. I didn't choose it I say.

I can assent to their 『Main Authorities』 being 『Light』 and 『Dark』, but I can't accept that mine is 『Fear』.

“In exchange for very few being able to choose a emotion-type 『Authority』, they can gain faith through that emotion, you see. It seems that you are only absorbing the fear directed at yourself, though.”

It felt like something from people my followers was flowing into me, but that was the reason? Just exactly how feared am I?

...Mn? There was something concerning in her words just now though.

“Can I absorb fear directed at things besides me too?”

“Obviously. 『Authorities』 are the right to manage the world, yanno. As long as you use their function properly, no matter who it's directed at, you'll be able to use it as faith. But well, emotions

directed at yourself don't need any conscious work on your half, so I guess it's that much more efficient, ey?"

I didn't know. I didn't know. I decided not to use my power as an Administrator because I had no idea what might've happened, but is that why? As long as it's linked to 'gathering faith'[filling my stomach] this is pretty important, so I'll have a look at it later.

"Anyway, the remaining ones are 『Sub-Authorities』 and 『Free-Authorities』, but they're decided among fellow Administrators. Mains and subs become the Administrator's specialty, yanno?"

"A specialised 『Authority』 cannot be used by other Administrators. On the other hand, free 『Authorities』 can be used by all Administrators."

"Then couldn't you just leave them all free?"

"If that was all it'd be aight, but you can't gather faith from free 『Authorities』. And if you can't distinguish whose responsibility is whose, the response to problems gets slow, and it's riddled with risk."

I see. That's why they're 『power』, 『responsibility』 and 『duty』, huh? So in exchange for gaining 『power』, you gain as much responsibility in exchange.

"Having said that, if all 『Authorities』 are specialised, then there would be none remaining for other Administrators to use. As a result, those that have a high degree of risk are used as 『Sub-Authorities』, while the rest are left as free."

"Anyway, here comes the main topic; up 'til now, all the 『Sub-Authorities』 have been split between me and her, but suddenly this new Administrator pops up. So we need to choose how to divide the 『Sub-Authorities』 again."

I understand why they came as a pair now. It was to hold an important meeting about how the world would be from now on.



With the general explanation finished, after brewing some more tea, the meeting resumed. Also, since I would feel bad about calling Tena to such a dangerous place, I steeped the tea myself. The two were making doubtful expressions, but I wouldn't accept any complaints.

"Well then, guess we'll quickly get to it. First of all, I'm taking 『Demon Race』. No discussions."

"I too will not concede 『Human Race』."

T-, The way this is going is... The so-called 'taking-all-the-good parts-to-yourself-and-leaving-the-newcomer-with-the-remains-newcomer-bullying-scene'!?

Are they going to say stuff like

“『Goblins』 or 『Vulgarness』 would fit ‘a person of low birth’[an embarrassment to the divines] like you.” or “You ain’t thinking that an accident like you could be on equal terms with us, right?” to me?

They carefully explained various things to me so I let my guard down, but thinking about it, there's no way that a human that messed up their territory by becoming a divine—although I didn't wish for it—would be accepted by them.

But I can't just take things sitting down either.

If I lose this power struggle, then it'll also mean that this country will be looked down on by its neighbours. It'll threaten the peaceful lives of Tena and the others too. I don't want to recklessly abuse my influence, but I need a minimum amount of power as a foothold.

I need to be stubborn here.

"I won't accept—"

"Leaving the rest to you."

"I shall leave the rest up to you."

—this?

"I do think that it is a difficult task, but I have faith in you."

"Well, just see this as training."

T-, These guys... They're planning on pushing all the work onto me? Right. Even if I take Leonora's story with a grain of salt, they were a pair that didn't care about the details as long as they were loved by their respective races. At the time, the conversation was about the Light God, but from what I can see it applies to the Dark God as well.

The Dark God called her overly serious, but just what part of this is overly serious?

Up until now, they'd be reluctantly working in order to protect their races, but now that there was somebody they could push all the work onto, they were planning to only take responsibility for the things they cared about, and were plotting to push everything else onto me.

This isn't a joke.

I want the bare minimum power to prevent myself from being invaded, but I don't want *everything* pushed onto me. What I want is to relax in peace; there's no point if my schedule is so busy I'll die.

I need to be stubborn here.

"I won't accept this."

"Ah?"

"Ah?"

I'm being glared at. As I thought, the Light God is scarier. But I can't give up here.

"If you're pushing all the other 『Authorities』 onto me, then I can also destroy the humans or the demons with 『Epidemic』. Are you fine with that?"

"——!"

"——!"

The moment I said that, the two gods stood straight up. I was being glared at just like before, but the pressure now was on another level.

"You have sure some guts, eh."

The Dark God was gathering mana in his hands, but the Light God waved him to stop, and spoke to me.

“Did you say, that you would destroy the Human Race?”

“The fact that I’ll be able to is the problem. If one god has all the 『Authorities』, they’ll be unstoppable.”

“I see. So you wanted to say that there is a need for the three of us to be in balance. You have a point. However——”

The Light God stopped her sentence midway, before pulling out a massive sword as tall as she was, and slamming it into the table. A thunderous boom rang out through the room, and the round table was split in half.

“——the next time you speak nonsense like that again, I will destroy you.”

Scary... Yes, I will definitely keep that in mind.

I raised my arms face-height in surrender, before stating my defence.

“It was just an example; I have no intention of doing it.”

“I sincerely hope not.”

It seems that I somehow got her to sheathe her sword.

Of course, I never had any intentions of destroying the humans or the demons to begin with, and it was because there was that risk that I wanted to give an example of why we needed balance, but from now on I’m going to be careful not to say anything stupid about messing with the humans in front of her.

I can sort of understand now why the Dark God calls her “overly serious”. But if she’s going to be serious, then I would’ve preferred her putting that into a different outlet.



After repairing the bisect table——the one who broke it was the Light

God, so why was I...?—we resumed the meeting.

However, the discussion dragged on and we didn't make progress. Although I prevented everything being pushed onto me, both the Light God and Dark God were trying their best to push things onto somebody else. In the end, it became something like "Even if one of us does something destructive, the other two can just cooperate and stop them." and we just kept pushing things onto each other.

If I relaxed I would've just gotten things pushed onto me instead, so I also objected, but because of that, we eventually fell into a completely unproductive cycle of pushing things onto each other.

The old and new, male god and goddess, positive attributes and negative attributes; a frenzied 2 vs 1 battle that continually changed positions continued on, and along the way we lost track of who was objecting to what anymore.

Because we didn't need to eat or sleep, it just meant that the argument continued endlessly.

"Hahh... Hahh..."

"Huu... We are not making progress, are we?"

"Seriously, you two are freaking stubborn."

Even though we didn't even need to breathe, we glared at each other breathless.

I wanted to tell him that he was just as stubborn as we were, but as the Light God said, we weren't making any progress.

"Alright. I've got an idea that'll definitely decide things."

"Hmm, please do say."

"Or rather, if you had something like that then say it to begin with."

Dark God. Shut up.

I only just thought of it, so it couldn't be helped.

"We'll have a match, and the winner gets to decide on how to divide things. However, with the balance between the three of us kept in mind."

"Ohh? Ain't that interesting."

“I see. Even if we continue the conversation, there does not seem to be an end in sight, so I think that idea is fine too. However, just what kind of match will it be?”

Naturally, I have no plans on simply battling it out. It won't be a game or anything either. It's clear that I'd completely lose in both.

“The match will be... a dungeon.”

Precepts for having an efficient meeting; as learned by Anri-san.

1. Decide on the length of the meeting beforehand
“An endless meeting is dangerous.”
2. Make sure to have somebody in charge of the direction of the meeting.
“Without one, everything gets out of control.”
3. Make sure to take minutes
“If everything is recorded, you'll be self-conscious and pay more attention to what you say... probably.”

Chapter 6 – On That Day, a Quake Ran Through the World

“Administration.”

I used my skill as an Administrator for the first time.

When I activated the skill, a menu-like window appeared before me.

Menu: Authority Activation
Intelligence Perusal
Divine Enchantment
Divine Revelation

It was pretty simple for a god's power, but considering my talk the other day with the Light God and Dark God, the power of the Divine Race is probably concentrated in 『Authority Activation』.

『Intelligence Perusal』 was just as the titles suggested, the ability to know about things that happened, and things that were happening. As you'd expect, even a divine wouldn't be able to gather information on the future, and in the end the only information you could browse were on the past and present.

『Divine Enchantment』 was the act of handing out the power of a god to other people in the form of divine protection... but apparently it was no different from the Divine Enchantment skill. If I really had to say it, then apparently it wouldn't bestow divine protection against my will, but I had no use for it anyway. In fact, I would prefer a way to undo the divine protections already out there.

And so, this time the one that I would be using was 『Divine Revelation』—an ability for transmitting words to your followers.

It was honestly pretty dull...

No, I mean, if it's the Light God or the Dark God then it might be an ability that transmits their words across the continent, but most of my believers are inside the temple, so there isn't much point. I could use my powers as the dungeon master to transmit my will after all,

and although I wouldn't be too keen on it, it wasn't as though I couldn't tell them directly either. Actually, let me revise that; it isn't "there isn't much point" but "there's absolutely no point".

But well, even if there isn't, the other two gods are using Divine Revelation, so (although I'm not sure if I have any,) it's sort of an issue of dignity. That's why I had to take the same method.

I picked the middle entry on the menu and muttered,

"Divine Revelation."



"What do you mean by "dungeon"?"

"I don't really get it, but you better not be talkin' outta your ass."

The two gods gave me extremely distrustful replies.

I know how they feel; right now I'm regretting it, wondering to myself what the heck I was saying. If I had to give an excuse, the meeting was *really* long, so I was mentally worn out.

But now that I'd already said it, it didn't feel like a situation where I could take it back. I'll force my way forward.

"Before I joined the Divine Race, I created a 31-floor dungeon, that still hasn't been conquered yet. If the humans conquer it, then Light God Sophia wins. If the demons conquer it, then the win goes to Dark God Anbaal. If it remains uncaptured within a certain amount of time, then it's my win."

It was just a random idea, but I think it sounds surprisingly good.

Leonora, and the Hero Party from a while ago; both were close to the strongest tier within their own races, and neither could conquer even half of the dungeon. I don't think a person that can conquer this dungeon exists in either race. Although, rather than pure ability, I'm talking more about the level of meatheadedness.

There's also the huge benefit of not fighting the Light God and Dark God directly. Since I'm lacking in direct combat experience, I'll be at a disadvantage no matter what, but if I use this method then my opponents will be the human and demon races, so my handicap

mostly decreases.

“Ohh...? Ain’t that sound interesting.”

“You intend on involving the Human Race into our conflict?”

The Dark God seemed like he’d agree, but the Light God showed disapproval at my idea. Because the Human Race is something to be protected for her, so she probably wanted to avoid exposing them to danger due to her own circumstances. Well, the Dark God should be the same in that aspect, but I guess it’s just a difference in personality.

“It’s going to determine the management of the world, so it’s not somebody else’s business.”

“...I understand. Very well. I agree. Anbaal, how about you?”

“I’m fine.”

Alright, both of them are on board. What’s left is to figure out the rules in detail.

After that, we discussed things little by little, and worked out a set of rules. Unlike the discussion about the 『Authorities』 we had in the beginning, this conversation went much more smoothly.

1. The match is in regards to who can conquer the dungeon “Holy Ground of the Evil God”. If the humans conquer it, then Light God Sophia wins. If the demons conquer it, then the win goes to Dark God Anbaal. If it remains uncaptured within a certain amount of time, then the winner is Evil God Anri.

In addition, ‘conquering’ is defined as being the first to touch the 『Proof of Capture』 on the 31st floor.

2. The winning Administrator gains the right to allocate the 『Sub-Authorities』. However, they will

do so with the balance of all three Administrators in mind.

3. The length of the match is 1 year.
4. The use of 『Authorities』 to directly aid or hinder the capture of the dungeon is prohibited.
5. During the duration of the match, Evil God Anri will not add additional floors.
6. During the duration of the match, Evil God anri will not summon additional monsters. However, a single dragon is permitted.
7. Evil God Anri will take all care possible that no fatalities will occur amongst the human and demon challengers.
8. Light God Sophia, as well as Dark God Anbaal will prohibit the Human Race and Demon Race respectively from committing acts of aggression or subversive activities against the Holy Anri Thearchy for the duration of the match.
9. Evil God Anri reserves the right to take an entrance fee from the challengers. However, the fee shall not exceed 1 silver coin per challenger, per challenge.

“Such worldiness...”

“You a miser? Oi!”

I hear nothing.

“By 『Proof of Capture』, you mean *that*? How do I say this... Your taste is pretty fucked, huh.”

“It isn’t like that by choice.”

I stationed the 『Proof of Capture』 on a pillar-shaped pedestal that was in the first room that you arrived at, coming down the stairs from the 30th floor. I'd hate it for them to come into the residential area and mess everything up, so I'm planning on having them teleport outside after taking the 『Proof of Capture』.

"You were awfully fixed on the dragon, but is there some kind of meaning to it?"

"Dragons are romance."

Various things happened causing me to put it off, but since I had plenty of mana, I wanted to summon the dragon that I'd been dreaming of seeing. And also, it wouldn't be good for the dungeon's image if there was no boss for the 30th floor.

I'm kind of getting the feeling that their gazes are getting more and more lukewarm^[1], but it's probably my imagination.

Also, it's set in the rules that nobody is allowed to attack or commit subterfuge against us in the confusion. It'd be troubling if they came and invaded after pretending to be here to challenge the dungeon, so it was also a necessary clause, but with this, I was able to postpone the establishment of the country as well. When it comes to creating a nation, I honestly don't think a 1-year grace period is anywhere near enough, but we don't have many people, so we should probably be able to get things together to an extent.

Also, the fact that the Light God and Dark God also acknowledged us as a country is probably going to be really meaningful in our international relationships from now on.



Through the revelation, I spoke to every believer in the country. About the Dark God that most humans weren't aware of. About the power struggle that had begun between the Light God, the Dark God, and myself. About how in relation to that, people from various countries, as well as the demons would be coming here to challenge the dungeon. And about how our citizens were not to harm the

challengers.

Also, I decided not to go out of my way to touch on the fact that our 'power struggle' was closer to pushing our workload onto each other. The other two were ordering their races to capture the dungeon with Divine Revelation, and I'm pretty sure they did the same.

It wasn't in the rules that my citizens couldn't harm the challengers so they technically could, but I can't say I'd approve of that, so I decided to forbid it. I'd be troubled if their actions ended up as a dispute after all, and more important than anything was the fact that this was our chance as a nation.

Now that they had been directly instructed by their gods, the humans and demons were probably eager to challenge the dungeon. Since my dungeon fundamentally kicks out the fallen, it's possible to challenge it again. In that case, it would be natural for challengers to live near the dungeon in order to challenge it. The nearest town is Riemel, but if there was an even closer place to stay, there wouldn't be any reason not to use it. If we open up inns near the temple, I'm sure we'll have customers.

I plan on taking the weapons, items and money of the losers just as I've always been, so if I open up a shop, and a storage store, I'm sure they'll be popular. The products for the store can just be things that we've taken from them.

It might also be good to sell maps of the dungeon floors, and periodically change things up. Adding floors was forbidden in the rules, but modifying existing floors shouldn't be a problem. It depends on the pricing, but I should be able to expect a certain amount of income.

Indeed; this match is a chance to acquire foreign currency.

Or rather, to our nation that doesn't have a major industry, if we don't do something like this we'll never be able to be anything more than a self-sufficient village, no matter how much time passes. The management of the country I'm going to leave to Pope and the others as always, but letting this wonderful chance escape would be a terrible move.

That's why at the end of the revelation, I finished with these words:

“From now on, our nation is to promote tourism as a “Dungeon Town”.”

Notes

1. I can't think of a way to adapt this in this instance, but it's a very common phrase in Japanese, so I may as well teach you guys:

A warm gaze, is the same as in English, **but a lukewarm gaze** means like, mildly disapproving.

Like, the gaze that you'd give when the only friend in your group with a girlfriend is flirting in front of you, or when you realise that one of your friends is a complete miser, or when one of your friends is vehemently cheering on some idol during the AKB elections.

Like, it's not a warm gaze, but it isn't a cold gaze either.

It's sort of just like “Bro...” or “For real...?” or “Mate...”, you know?

(Although I suppose some people might give a terribly cold gaze for the last one.)

Chapter 7 – Dungeon Restart

Ever since the revelation the other day, we began constructing the town around the temple again as a matter of urgent priority, and I was busy maintaining the dungeon that I had left alone for a while.

Ever since that day that I became the Evil God, not a single person has come to invade the dungeon with the temple built on top. It's not like I deactivated anything, so in that respect the dungeon was still ready for people at this very moment, but since I may as well, I decided that I would perform maintenance on various things just in case.

Now then, with that as the preface, although this may be a little sudden, I'd like to change to the event that I've been waiting for. Indeed. It's time for the much awaited dragon summoning.

Dragon—the symbol of the strongest being that stands at the top of the fantasy world. Sometimes as the strongest enemy, sometimes as the most reliable ally, sometimes as the god that rules the world – though the position may change, the dragon is written as the strongest.

A majestic body and sharp fangs. Tough scales and claws that can tear apart any matter of being. And finally, great wings fitting of the ruler of the skies. With just one breath, they can blow apart a great army, and are sometimes able to make free use of even powerful magic. The strongest monster, the dragon, is such a being.

You can roughly split them into the lizard-like western dragons, and the snake-like eastern dragons, but it really has to be a western dragon, I think. I think there are all sorts of dragon fans, so there might be people who disagree, but at the very least, right now I'm the one doing the summoning so I'll choose the way I like.

Or so I was faintly thinking, as I performed the preparations for the dragon summoning.

It's a dragon after all, so I'm sure it'll definitely be huge.

It might be a little dangerous to summon it in the office where the

dungeon core is. The truth is I made that kind of mistake during the summoning for the 20th floor's orichalcum Living Armour, and I have bitter memories of having the room half-destroyed. I won't make the same mistake again.

Instead of the immobile main core, I held the portable subcore and teleported to the 30th floor boss room to summon the dragon. Even if I summon it somewhere else I'll have to teleport it here anyway, so it saves time just to summon it here to begin with.

The room has been the same ever since the day that I met with Leonora here. The throne is human-sized and unsuited to the dragon I'm going to summon, but I'll think about changing the room after the summoning to match it.

"Dungeon Create."

I muttered so with the subcore in my hand, and a window appeared. I chose the "summon" entry from it, and from various monster categories, I picked "dragon type". And when I did, a list with various pictures of dragons and their parameters appeared. Fire dragons and water dragons and earth dragons and wind dragons – I felt like grinning just by looking at the lineup, but I worked hard to keep cool. Since I'm going to summon one anyway, I'll go with the strongest. Since the day I became a divine, my mana's just been piling up without any chance to use it, so I can pick whatever dragon I want. It was possible to sort the list by the amount of mana used, so I looked at the one with the biggest value... How cool. He looks strong. I'll go with him.

"Summon Dragon."

It's not like I needed to say that, but it just came out of my mouth. When I began summoning, a gargantuan magic circle of 20m diameter appeared in front of me. When the magic circle flickered, an enormous amount of magic gathered above it, and space seemed to warp. And then, something giant began to show itself from that warp.

That giant being let out a roar before my expectant eyes.

"PIKYAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAA!!"



Why did this happen.

There's no better way to word my feelings. I just stood there dumbfounded, gazing at the tragedy before me.

A majestic body and sharp fangs. Tough scales and claws that can tear apart any matter of being. And finally, great wings fitting of the ruler of the skies. A dragon with all of these things was cowering in a corner of the room, hiding its face against the wall. Literally the Japanese phrase, 'covering your head and leaving your bottom exposed'.

Black Dragon Vardneel.

500,000,000 mana points; an amount that surpasses just plain harassment, and is at a level where you just lose interest in summoning him to begin with. The most powerful and wicked dragon that had materialised in exchange for that ridiculous amount of mana let out a screech the moment he appeared on the magic circle, and as good as dashed away from me like a startled hare.

Mn, it's not as though I didn't have some faint idea that this would happen.

Lately I've only been talking to humans and demons, as well as divines who it didn't work on at all so I totally forgot about its existence, but the description for the Evil God Aura skill certainly did say "has enough power to send a dragon running frantically".

I acknowledge this. I acknowledge this, but it really is cruel.

Even though I've been looking forward to this... always looking forward to this...

I was even uncharacteristically excited while daydreaming about what would happen once the strongest dragon had my divine protection. But looking at him, it seems completely impossible that he'd accept me from the heart. And in fact, just taking a step forward from where I was standing had him tremble with a start, and frantically press himself further up the wall to escape.

Ah-, he's finally showing his belly.

Don't want. I don't want the strongest dragon's submission pose. I'm

begging you, so don't destroy my yearning towards dragons any further.

No matter how I thought about it, staying here wouldn't better the situation at all, so in disappointment I left the room.



Instead of returning to the office, I just teleported to the temple on the 5th surface floor.

There are plenty of things that I needed to do besides the dragon summoning, but I'm feeling really discouraged.

Laying down on the canopy bed in my room, I hugged my pillow and buried my face in it.

"Anri-sama?"

Hearing a lisping voice call out to me, I... had a look without looking that way. Apparently Lili had been in my room reading a book. She's sharing a room with Tena, but lately Tena's been busy and can't look after her, so Lili's been spending a lot of time in my room. I didn't notice she was here, so I showed her something a little uncool.

I got up and was about to turn to Lili and reply, when I hesitated because I had no idea what to say.

Perhaps she noticed because Lili closed the book she had been reading, and then trotted up to me from the table.

"Anri-sama, what's wrong? Are you sad?"

Apparently she realised my depressed atmosphere.

She asked me that while patting my head, so my eyes grew a little hot.

"It's fine, there was just something a little sad."

I soothed Lili, and patted her chestnut hair back. Lili narrowed her eyes comfortably.

I was finding Lili's actions lovely, when I suddenly noticed that she still had her collar, and unconsciously frowned.

She hasn't been blessed with my divine protection the same way

Tena has, so she's still a human. That's fine in and of itself, but the problem is that she's still a slave. When I became a divine, Tena joined the Apostle Race as well and was freed from her slave status. I considered that the same thing might happen if I gave Lili my divine protection as well, but there's the possibility that apostles are immortal, so I was hesitant to change her at her current age. If I can learn to use my 『Authorities』 decently, then I think I'll be able to release her from being a slave without changing her from a human, but it's impossible at the moment.

I removed my eyes from her collar, and spoke to her after changing gears.

“Are you studying, Lili?”

“Yeah, I was reading the book.”

“Good girl. I'll read it out to you.”

“Really!?”

It would probably be better as study for her to read a book herself, but just a little bit as thanks for cheering me up should be okay. Finding it charming that Lili's eyes were glittering in excitement, I nodded in reply. It feels that my heart that had splintered from that shocking event was now being healed.

“What kind of book were you reading?”

“This.”

Lili held out the book that she had been reading.
I looked at the title of the book.

『The Girl and the Dragon』

No more.

Chapter 8 – Invaders, or Rather, Customers

『Welcome!』

There are various dungeons across the world, but there is probably none that welcomes people with such a line.

If there was, then it would be plenty reason to question the sanity of that world's inhabitants.

Incidentally, the invaders, or rather, customers haven't reached the dungeon yet. What awaits them is a trial of ambushing assassins that block their way. Using my power as an Administrator, the Intelligence Perusal, I was peeking o-, I mean, observing them.

『Mister, I recommend our inn!』

『No, come to ours!』

『We've got cute girls!』

『Weapons, armours, we have everything! Please come to our shop!』

『You're missing medicinal herbs!? You mustn't go to the dungeon without being fully prepared!』

『If you leave your things with us, you can fail in the dungeon without a problem! The storage store is this way!』

『Won't you buy a map? without this the dungeon will be quite hard, you know!』

Indeed; the assassins known as touters.

Before they reach the dungeon, the challengers are exposed to the mad scramble for customers by the workers at the inns, shops, and storage stores in front of the dungeon. At this point, 9 out of 10 will drop out. Well, I say drop out, but it's not like they die or get seriously injured or anything. They're just a day late to the dungeon.

But still, these salespeople are all really formidable merchants. Are they really Evil God followers? Or could it be that I overly motivated

them with my revelation the other day?

The small fraction of challengers that make it past the iron willed assassins, as well as the people that folded and come a day late can reach as far as the temple that serves as the entrance to the dungeon.

Hearing the words 'Evil God Temple', most people would be pretty cautious, but we don't have gatekeepers or anything, and the doors are wide open.

However, lurking by the door are the second round of assassins.

And right now, a victim... Ah, my tongue slipped. Sorry, a new challenger had freshly arrived. And as though completely natural, the second round of assassins appeared before then.

『Do you believe in Anri-sama~!?』

『OWAH!? W-, who the heck are you.』

It was a blonde haired man in luxurious priest's clothes... the Merry Pope Harvin. Any head of state should be really busy, but whenever new guests come, he often appears.

『Anri as in... the Evil God? Of course I don't believe in something like that!』

Hearing his reaction, I basically thought "Well, yeah." but the Pope looked up at the sky like it was the end of the world.

『Oohh, what sin! Anri-sama! Please grant these pitiful lambs your mercy.』

『Who the hell is a pitiful lamb!』

Please what?

By the way, this is a bit of a digression but this is his fifth time screaming those words today. There have also only been five batches of challengers today. And each time, the Pope had grieved like it was the end of the world. The challengers all yelled angrily at his words, but he wasn't moved at all.

『I present this to you. A precious scripture copied personally by my

hand. Please read this and learn of Anri-sama.』

While saying that, he took out a single book and handed it to the challenger. The man took the book by reflex, and accidentally accepted it.

...Indeed. He accepted it.

『The heck is... Wai-, UOOHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!? Ain't this the Black Scripture? What the fuck have you done!』

Apparently the infamy of the scripture that I wrote is already well-known throughout the other countries, and so the man realised what had been handed to him. Once somebody accepts the cursed scriptures, they continually meet with misfortune until they transcribe a copy and hand it to somebody else, and apparently through this method, the scripture was already slowly spreading through the surrounding nations. ...It's a book of morals on how to live properly though.

When I showed Leonora the stuff I had written, the curse kicked in, which was how this whole thing started, but since I really do feel sorry for causing misfortune to befall others for no reason, I at least made sure to have the rules properly added onto on the back. Thanks to that, everyone immediately knew how to cope with it, and the recognition of the scriptures as a dangerous object quickly spread.

But still, just how many copies has he written. This is almost the 20th book he's taken out of his pocket, today alone.

『I'LL REMEMBER THIS YOU FUCKERRRR!!!』

Leaving behind a clichéd line, the challenger ran out of the temple with the scripture in hand. I'm sure he's gone to grab the things he needs to write a copy.

And like that, through the second round of assassins, the challenger who had finally made it to the dungeon dropped out as well, and once again, today the "Holy Land of the Evil God" continues to boast of being impregnable.

...Wai-, isn't that bad? How is anything going to get done if everybody gets driven off at the entrance.

It's great that the dungeon is impregnable and all, but I'll be troubled

if the guests give up and never come again. The first round of assassins—the touters—are fine since they’re just slowing them for a day, and aren’t driving them away. But the second round is no good.

“Divine Punishment.”

I teleported the tray from atop the table, to high above his head... right above it.



『Haha, I truly apologise. I was a little too eager in my missionary work.』

I was conversing with the Pope across the screen, who now had a lump on his head. I’m thankful for his missionary work, but the way he’s doing things is terrible. No matter how you think about it, far from converting them, all it’s going to do is make them more hostile. Well, it might make them more fearful, so I might gain some faith through that instead though.

『Proselytising is fine, but chasing them away is forbidden. Rather than aiming for them when they come, it would be better to go for them when they leave.』

『I see! In other words, it would be easier for them to accept you after they experience your mighty power, Anri-sama. I am in much admiration of your wisdom.』

No, that’s not what I mean but... Well, whatever.

『Have all the visitors been human?』

『Yes. At the very least, I have not seen any demons that have made it as far as the temple.』

I asked the Pope about the challengers thus far, but apparently he hadn’t seen anybody from the demon side yet.

But I had predicted this to an extent. Where we are now was originally part of the Human Territory, so it was enemy territory for

the Demon Race. If a large number of them came here at once, there would be the chance of the neighbouring countries overreacting, so the demons have no choice but to proceed with caution.

What's more, looking at Leonora, the Human Race and Demon Race look basically the same. They don't have horns or wings or anything. I asked her before, but at best you can only tell them apart through hair and eye colour. If they're mixed, then the characteristics would average out, but as two races that were created as enemies, romantic relations between the two are pretty rare, so we should be able to tell them apart. But well, apparently thanks to taking in Summoned Heroes and the like, they're gradually becoming mixed though.

My biggest worry would be a fight between humans and demons arising in the temple or the surroundings, but at the very least it doesn't seem to be a worry at this moment in time. Having said that though, the Dark God set off the demon side as well, so this peace definitely won't last forever. We need to stay on alert.

『Got it. I'll continue to leave it to you.』

『Yes, understood. I shall convert them without fail.』

『No, like I said...』

『Oh, my apologies. I was to do so once they left, wasn't it.』

Will things really be okay?



“Fumu. It is quite delicious today as well.”

“Huhu, we have plenty, so please do ask for seconds without reserve.”

“Nom nom.”

Tena and Leonora were off early for once, so Lili included, today we

were able to eat together. Lately we've all been busy and haven't been able to eat together, so it was a precious chance to do so.

"I see. It truly is delicious, isn't it."

"Hmm, ain't bad, ey."

"Y-, Yes! T-, Thank you very much."

...If it wasn't for these guys, that is.

why are they even here, these two gods. Even though they apparently didn't need food, they're sneakily eating ours. What was pitiful was that Tena was quite nervous.

Incidentally, Leonora's been sitting next to the Dark God and bravely tending to him, while Lili was sitting on the Light God's lap and being fed. The Dark God is unsociable, but wasn't unkind to Leonora... It really is the chest huh. Is it her chest?

Leaving the jokes aside, the Light God was pampering Lili alone, and the Dark God was being kind to Leonora, so it was probably due to the patronage of their respective races. Their attitude towards Tena and I was clearly different. I don't think it would kill them to be a little kinder to us though.

"What is the matter?"

"Hahhn?"

Perhaps because they noticed my gaze, the two of them spoke to me.

"Why are you here?"

"I've already given instructions to the Demon Race, so all that's left is to watch em. So ain't it better to be close then?"

"I am the same. And also, if I watch over them from up close, when it comes time, I will be able to save the lives of the challengers as well."

Hang on a moment.

I get that you want to watch over the match from up close since it'll determine everything from now on, but I can't ignore that.

“...Are you going to be here the whole match?”

“Of course.”

“Ain’t it obvious?”

Can’t you go home?

“Is there some problem, Anri?”

“Anri-sama?”

Guh-, Leonora and Lili have been taken by the enemy.
I looked towards my final ally, Tena.

“ ... ”

“ ... ”

The silent conversation we had, 『Do something.』 『That’s impossible.』 was decided in an instant.

If the followers of the Sacred Light Church and the members of the Demon Race knew that the Light God and Dark God were staying in the Evil God Temple, I wonder if they would go insane.

While pondering things in a state close to escaping reality, I gave a deep, silent sigh.

Chapter 9 – They Came Back

『Is this really... the dungeon from that time?』

『There shouldn't be any mistaking the location, but...』

『I'd heard the rumours, but it really is shocking, huh?』

『It really was a dangerous place, ey?』

Through the Intelligence Perusal screen, I saw the party of four sidestepping the touters with noncommittal replies, before looking up at the temple.

An ikemen swordsman with short blonde hair, a bishoujo nun, a voluptuous mage oneesan, and a swordsman with a good body.

Indeed. The slab thieves came back.

...Sorry, I meant, the Hero Party.

Back when I was still a human, they invaded the dungeon, and reaching as far as the No Life King's boss room, they challenge... nobody, because they turned tail and went home; the muscle-brained Hero Party. Even though I had wondered when they would come challenge the place again, in the end they went off somewhere, but it seems that right now they were planning on tackling the dungeon a second time.

"These guys are your representatives?"

"Yes. Aside from the revelation to all of the Human Race, I also gave them a mission through the Sacred Sword."

I asked Light God Sophia who was sitting next to me and looking at the screen as well, and she replied with a smile. I could see how much she trusted them through her expression. Certainly, they are the most talented amongst the people she has to move. I don't know if he's the only hero, or if there are more of them, but I don't think there's any doubt that they're the pinnacle of the Human Race.

Considering that all the other challengers have collapsed before the 10th floor, I can agree that there isn't much point if the challengers

aren't at least their level of strength.

But having said that, as somebody who knows how the last time went down, I just can't understand how she can be so confident in them.

"They didn't come even though all sorts of crazy stuff happened, so I thought they went on a journey somewhere, but?"

"Yes, they entered the Demon Territory and made it close to the Demon King Castle."

"Yeah, basically to the front door after all, yanno?"

Even though they were about to challenge the last boss, you called them back here? How ruthless.

As somebody who became a hero through the "Sacred Goddess-sama's" divine protection, he probably couldn't refuse a direct request from her.

『But still, to think that you got a direct request from Sacred Goddess-sama, ey?』

『Yeah, she told me that this was even higher priority than then Demon King Subjugation, so it's probably pretty important.』

『More important than the Demon King Subjugation... it's pretty hard to even imagine, huh?』

『It was Sacred Goddess-sama's esteemed words, so I think it must be a deep and thoughtful plan that we can't even imagine.』

It's true that it's important, but somehow I'm really starting to sympathise for these guys.

Name: Arc
Race: Human Race
Sex: Male
Age: 26
Job: Swordsman
Level: 41
Title: Hero of the Holy Sword

Name: Zio
Race: Human Race
Sex: Male
Age: 28
Job: Swordsman
Level: 35
Title: None

Name: Frey
Race: Human Race
Sex: Female
Age: 24
Job: Mage
Level: 35
Title: None

Name: Widdi
Race: Human Race
Sex: Female
Age: 20
Job: Cleric
Level: 34
Title: None

I decided to try having a look at their statuses. As you'd expect, I don't remember the details from last time, but I do recall that Arc's level was in the 30s, so there's no doubt that they've levelled up. That was just how many fierce battles they had overcome to reach the Demon King, and just as they were about to challenge him... they were called back. When I imagined their hardships, it felt like tears were going to fall.



The Hero Party didn't overlook last time's failure, and came

completely prepared for camping, smoothly advancing as far as the 10th floor. But they've already reached the 10th floor once before, so this much was within my expectations. The issue is what happens from now on.

Will they finally overcome the puzzle that defeated them last time? Holding my breath in anticipation, I watched them reach the pedestal.

"What is that pedestal?"

"It's a puzzle used to open the path to the 10th floor boss room, and unless you collect the stone slabs and put them in, the door won't open."

"Ahh, I see..."

When I answered Light God Sophia's question, Leonora who was sitting beside me, face-palmed. Speaking of which, she spent a whole hour on this too, huh.

Incidentally, Dark God Anbaal wasn't here today.

『...? Hasn't the inscription changed from last time?』

『You're right, Frey. Although the latter half is the same as previously, the first half has changed, hasn't it.』

『Yeah but more important than that is how we're gunna get it open, right? How's the Holy Sword, Arc?』

『Give me a moment... I see. Apparently we just need to collect the stone slabs hidden on this floor and fit them in.』

!?

Hearing the unexpected conversation from beyond the screen, I let out a gasp, and turned towards Light God Sophia. And when I did, she averted her eyes. From what I saw, I immediately understood.

...This woman leaked the information she heard from me through her revelation.

"You cheater."

“I am hurt. Giving advice through revelations was never forbidden.”

Certainly, it is within the rules. Using 『Authorities』 is forbidden, but we never forbade the use of revelations. But that doesn't change the fact that it was unfair.

But still, this might be bad. I underestimated them because I thought that these muscleheads wouldn't make it past the mid-floor puzzles, but if Light God Sophia supports them then it's a different story.

With an Administrator's Intelligence Perusal, they can look at all the information in the world, so with her help, the Hero Party will break through the puzzles in an instant.

Wait, hang on?

Then why did she go out of her way to ask me? If she knew how to solve the puzzle, then she wouldn't have asked a question like that. In other words, even if she could see the puzzle itself, she didn't know how to solve it.

In that case, as long as I don't tell her the solution, the usefulness of her advice will become limited too.

“I'm not giving you any more hints.”

“That is a shame.”

Light God Sophia replied with an expression that didn't seem to think it was that much of a shame at all. But well, she probably wasn't so optimistic to think that my tongue would slip over and over after all, so I guess she was just trying to make a gain at the beginning.

It's also a fact that even without clear answers, just having a third party's advice should lower the puzzles' difficulty a lot.

I had thought that the middle layer's puzzle floors would hold out for a year, but now the lower floors might have their turn too.



After an hour of touring the 10th floor to collect the slabs, the Hero Party returned to the pedestal. The four members had a slab each, and were lined up in front of the pedestal.

Mn? Four slabs?

Why are there four? I should have only placed three of them.

Ah-, could it be that they continued to take care of that one slab that they ran away with last time? I've already changed the marks and replaced the slabs as well, so the slab from last time isn't any use through.

『Now then, shall we put the slabs in already?』

『Yeah, in these three holes... Huh?』

『We have four slabs, but... Where does everyone else think the last one should be placed?』

『There doesn't seem to be any other place to put it, huh.』

Apparently the Hero Party also noticed the odd number of slabs, because just as they were about to put the slabs into the pedestal, they began looking for another place to put a slab in instead.

Of course, there isn't any such place.

Seeing them search every corner of the pedestal without finding anything, and even beginning to search the inside of the room made me want to hold my head. And then, as though it were natural, Arc began to hold the pommel of the sword to his forehead. Probably looking for Sacred Goddess Sophia's advice.

Looking at this, once they go to the middle floors, won't she be stuck guiding them the entire time? It feels like I can see a large sweat drop forming at the back of her head.

"Sophia, tell them to exclude the slab from last time."

"Anri!"

"...Are you fine with that?"

Hearing my suggestion, both Leonora and Light God Sophia raised voices of surprised. It's true that I was taking back what I just said, but they were just so slow that I couldn't bear to watch any longer. And what's more, the fact that another slab was mixed in was unexpected, so there wasn't any hint either, which is why I think just this much follow-up is fine.

Also, it isn't as though I don't gain anything from having them

advance forward. Seeing whether or not they'll be able to defeat the 10th floor boss should serve as a reference for how our match will go from now on. Or rather, I really don't want to let them get away a second time.

It definitely wasn't because I felt sorry for her when I saw her flustered at how to answer.

"Understood. Then I shall take you up on your words, Anri."

After Light God Sophia advised Arc through a revelation, he explained the situation to his companions before throwing away last time's slab and placing the remaining three into the pedestal.

Hey-, just because you don't need it now, doesn't mean you should just throw it away there. Won't that just confuse other people?

The Hero Party unknowingly left a confusing gift for the future latecomers, before stepping through the newly opened doors to the throne room. I'd better take that slab back later, or else...

Chapter 10 – The Black Tyrant

“Thee who wouldst come in challenge of the Black Tyrant, arrange correctly the stars.”

Just as the new words said, waiting for them inside as they stepped into the throne room was the Black Tyrant—

『GUOOOOHHHHHHHHHH!!!』

—Black Dragon Vardneel.

The roar from his giant frame was enough to instil physical pressure, and assaulted the Hero Party. With an overpowering strength that pressured you just from being there, he was truly befitting of the word ‘tyrant’.

...I would have really preferred that you showed that majesty before me too.

『A-, A dragon!?!』

『What size!』

『No good, everybody please take your formations!』

『It's coming!』



“Anri? Wasn't the boss of the 10th floor the No Life King?”

“I switched them.”

Since Leonora knew who the old floor boss was she asked me that question, but the answer was really simple. I thought about it for a while after the dragon summoning, and I decided to switch the dragon to the 10th floor.

But it couldn't be helped, right? After seeing the dragon lay belly up, there was no way I would want him to guard the 30th floor that's

basically our final stronghold. I'm sure anyone else would feel the same.

Incidentally, I kept the enchanted Orichalcum Armour as the 20th floor boss, and moved the former 10th floor boss, No Life King, to the 30th floor instead. Well, perhaps it would be more accurate to say the former No Life King. After he received my divine protection, he ended up evolving into something else.

"What a thing for you to have summoned! That is Black Dragon Vardneel... The wicked dragon said to bring calamity to the world!"

"Mn?"

Light God Sophia asked me that with a frantic expression, but I just reflexively tilted my head in question. I don't know about "bringing calamity to the world" but I *did* choose the one that needed the most mana points, so I suppose it shouldn't be surprising even if he had such an anecdote. Well, it isn't surprising, but at the same time thinking about how he's been ever since I summoned him, I just can't match him with the image from the anecdote.

To begin with, why is she even so panicked?

He certainly does have high specs, but it's nothing that a divine can't handle.

"He shouldn't be so strong that an Administrator can't handle him."

"That may be true, but just how many casualties do you think will come about until we stop him!"

I see. I suppose it's quite like her to be worried about harm to the Human Race.

But...

"As long as he's in my dungeon, there won't be any damage."

".....Ah."

"Now that Anri mentions it, he doesn't seem like he'll be able to leave, either."

Right. Just like Leonora said, Black Dragon Vardneel basically can't

leave the dungeon of his own power. No, rather than leaving the dungeon, with that huge size of his, he can't even leave the room. As for ways for him to leave, it's basically just having me teleport him. As you'd expect, it really would be too pitiful to keep him locked in the room forever, so I was thinking of taking him out on walks on occasion, but even if I did take him outside, I wouldn't be letting him roam wild or anything.

So there really isn't any need to worry about casualties.

“ ... ”

“ ... ”

“ ... ”

An awkward silence filled the room. Light God Sophia's face was slightly red. Now that she's calm and has a proper understanding of things, she looks embarrassed about how panicked she was just now.

“It seems that the battle is about to begin.”

Ah. She changed the subject.



Frey blasted flames at Black Dragon Vardneel's face, who was flying about with a nimbleness unsuited for his size. Because of the magical resistance, there was basically no damage, but as you'd expect he probably couldn't ignore a direct flame to the face, so his speed lowered just a little. With that opening, the four of them avoided his direct attack. In the next instant, his large frame flew through the area that the Hero Party had just been standing. Had they not retreated, they would have been sent flying and probably taken massive damage.

『Eat this!』

Before the Black Dragon turned around to face them, Zio slashed his sword down on Vardneel's shoulders. However, a metallic **-KIN-** rang

out, and the sword was easily repelled.

『Tsk, how tough... Oop.』

Perhaps irritated at the slash despite the lack of damage, Vardneel swept his foreleg across, and Zio immediately jumped back to evade.

『Doesn't look like my sword can cut him, ey?』

『Then how about my Holy Sword!』

With the foreleg now in the open after its attack on Zio, this time Arc slashed at it with his Holy Sword. Unlike Zio's, the Holy Sword wasn't repelled, and cut into the Black Dragon's scales, splashing just a little blood.

『GYAOHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!!』

『I managed to cut him, but he really does have amazing defence, huh.』

The Black Dragon screamed in pain, before snapping its sharp fangs at Arc.

『Like I'd letcha!』

Zio hit the Black Dragon in the face with his shield this time, as it was about to bite at Arc. There was no damage, but being hit from the side had changed the course of its bite, and its jaws closed without catching Arc.

『Thanks, you saved me!』

『No worries. It doesn't seem like I'll do any damage, so I'll focus on harassing it. You concentrate on attacking with the Holy Sword!』

『Got it!』

Zio threw away his sword, and held the shield in both hands, whilst beginning to hit the Black Dragon's attacks to harass it. With the openings that Zio created, as the only one who could do damage, Arc cut at the Black Dragon. The backline supported with flames, and they slowly but surely damaged Vardneel.

But perhaps growing impatient at them, Vardneel took in a deep breath, and roared. Together with the roar came an explosive wind pressure that assaulted the Hero Party.

『GUOHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!!』

『UWAHH!?!』

『Ku-, SHIT!』

Last time there had been a lot of distance between them, so the roar had only broken their postures, but this time they had taken it at point-blank range. Arc and Zio were blown away with ease, and smacked into a wall a few metres from where Frey and Widdi were.

『Arc-sama!?!』

『Zio!?!』

Frey and Widdi ran up to them, and began healing them with medicinal herbs and recovery magic. Giving the Hero Party a sidelong glance, the Black Dragon began to take an even deeper breath than before.

『I-, It can't be...』

『A dragon breath!?!』

Frey and Widdi both grew pale, but with Arc and Zio collapsed, they couldn't avoid it. With determined expressions, the two of them began chanting magic.

『—————!!!』

From the large jaws of the dragon flew a black flame wreathed in purple lightning. Frey had used fire magic to try and reduce the damage of the breath even a little, but her fire magic was swallowed by the gargantuan flame in an instant. Widdi had deployed a barrier around them to protect them, but it showed only a meagre resistance, before being smashed to pieces by the dragon breath. It seemed that they were in dire straits after being enveloped in the dragon breath, but Arc and Zio had recovered enough to throw themselves at Widdi and Frey respectively, to try and put even a little

distance between it.

The dragon breath collided with the floor that they had been on just a moment ago, and the four of them were blown away by the shockwave. Although it was a shockwave, its power was tremendous, and after being slammed against the floor, although their lives were not in danger, they could only groan, unable to stand.

On the other hand, the Black Dragon turned towards them, and began leisurely drawing near.



“O-, Oi... Isn’t that bad, Anri?”

“Anri! At this rate, they will be!?”

“It’s fine.”

Watching the screen, both Leonora and Light God Sophia were frantic. Light God Sophia had even drawn out her greatsword, and from her expression it seemed like she was about to jump in any second now. Calming the two of them, I sent my voice to the other side of the screen.

『Vnee^[1], sit.』

The response was dramatic, and Black Dragon Vardneel who had been walking towards the fallen Hero Party—pet name Vnee, immediately sat down on the spot, with a proper posture.

“Heh?”

“Hah?”

Both Leonora and Light God Sophia let out stupid sounds and stiffened, but I decided to ignore them for now, and created a magic circle to teleport the Hero Party out of the dungeon. After confirming that they had been sent out without issue, I turned around and found Leonora beginning to dogeza. She had grown used to averting her eyes from mine, but because she was distracted this time, it seems that her reaction was slow.

“What was what?”

“Even if you ask me that...”

Light God Sophia spoke to me, still in a daze. But there was no way to respond except that it was the fruits of my training.

Unlike undead and living armours, Vnee is a living being, so naturally he needs food. I’m the one that feeds him, but since I was going out of my way, I decided that I may as well try my hand at training him. Each and every time I went to his room, he would dash away into the corner of the room, but we *have* become close enough that he’ll respond to my commands now. For now I’ve managed to teach him “sit”, “down”, and “wait”. “handshake” would crush me, so I’m not going to do that one.

“You... are treating the most wicked dragon as your pet?”

“Well, it’s Anri after all.”

For some reason both Light God Sophia and the no-longer dogeza-ing Leonora gave tired sighs.

I wonder if I should give Vnee a collar.

...Ah-, I forgot to collect the Hero Party’s items and money.

Notes

1. Vnee is read as ‘vu nii’.

Chapter 11 – The Kings That Sit in the Four Heavens

“『Hmph, so this is the temple of the Evil God or whatever, huh.』”

A new challenger stood at the entrance to the temple. That in and of itself was something that happened every day and wasn't particularly noteworthy, but the challenger this time was different to all the others.

He was a fearless-looking man with short pointed hair, and a large build, but he had characteristic silver hair and red eyes were just like Leonora's... the characteristics of the Demon Race.

The believers in the temple had apparently noticed as well, because unlike with the other challengers, they watched him from afar. Because of their contact with Leonora, the followers had become more or less used to the Demon Race, but as you'd expect, it was different with somebody they'd never seen before.

Name: Ijido
Race: Demon Race
Sex: Male
Age: 31
Job: Mage
Level: 26
Title: None

I checked his status, but he really was a demon after all. And what's more, there was a part of his status that concerned me.

“Aah, so they've finally come, ey.”

“Nu... To think that it would be him of all people.”

With something at the tip of my mind, I tilted my head in wonder, while Dark God Anbaal and Leonora reacted next to me as they watched the screen. Leaving Dark God Anbaal aside, I was worried

about Leonora's unpleasant expression.

"Do you know him?"

"He is one of the Four Heavenly Kings, but he has always been courting me, you see."

So they had them too. The Four Heavenly Kings.

"What kind of people are the Four Heavenly Kings?"

"Mn? You want to know about the Four Heavenly Kings? My father, His Majesty the Demon King has a great many subordinates, but amongst them the most powerful four high-class demons are called the Four Heavenly Kings. Each of the Kings govern a different element; that man—Adamantite Earth Fiend Ijido is 『Earth』, you see."

By the four elements, does she mean earth, water, fire, and wind? Even if she says 'govern', it's not like they're divines, so she probably means that they specialise in magic of that element.

"The others are 『Wind's』 Fierce Gale Knight Renarve, and 『Water's』 Bloodfrost General Vikuto. It seems that this time only Ijido came though..."

"? Isn't that only three?"

Since they're called the Four Heavenly Kings, and she said they governed the four elements, you'd expect there to be four of them, but she only named earth, water, and wind. It's weird that there isn't a 『Fire』.

"No, umm... me..."

"Huh?"

Mii? That's the name of the last King?

"Like I said, the last one is me... The one that governs 『Fire』, Magic Flame Princess Leonora."

Leonora replied in embarrassment. Speaking of which, aside from darkness magic she was good at fire magic too, wasn't she.

The Demon King's daughter is a Heavenly King? It seems abnormal that a member of the royal family is a subordinate though.

"So you were one of the Four Heavenly Kings. From now on I shall call you Magic Flame Princess Leonora."

"I'm begging you, so please don't. It's pretty embarrassing."

Seeing Leonora turn red in embarrassment made me feel like bullying her a little, but if I went too far she might hate me, so I decided to be prudent.

"And so, just how strong is he?"

A while ago I saw that his level was about the same as Leonora's, but I wanted the opinion of somebody who actually knew his strength.

"He is on par with me, but since he's of the earth element, I suppose I should say that he's focused on defence. If we fought one on one, I would probably win. The personality doesn't match, but he is somebody who can show his true worth when paired up with somebody who excels in offence."

Right, when I looked at his status earlier there was something gnawing at me, but I finally know what it was now... His job.

Leonora is a magic boxer, and is an all-purpose type that is fine with both physical combat and magic. Because she was somebody who could play both frontline and backline, she was able to do something as amazing as conquer the dungeon solo.

But in contrast, the man on the screen was a mage... It doesn't suit his second name of Adamantite Earth Fiend or whatever, but if you think about his job alone, then he should be somebody in the backline. Thinking about it normally, it doesn't seem possible for him to solo the dungeon.

I was wondering if he had some secret trump card, but from Leonora's explanation, that didn't seem to be the case either.

"What kind of magic is earth magic?"

"Unlike fire and water magic which 『bring forth』 phenomena, earth and wind magic mostly 『manipulate』 things that already exist. For

earth magic, the ground, and for wind, the atmosphere; that sort of thing, I suppose. The primary method of combat for earth magic is cladding the caster in an armour of rocks, creating shields from the ground, and creating golems from earth I suppose.”

I see. A magic that displays its power best when fighting on the ground, huh. It seems like a skill that would make the choice of battlefield extremely important. But in that case, there’s something that I’m confused about.

“The dungeon is created by bricks, but can you use earth magic on them?”

“It’s probably impossible.”

“.....”

With Leonora stating so clearly that it was impossible, I didn’t know what my next words were supposed to be.

“Supposing they were normal bricks, then I think it would be possible, but the ones in the dungeon are fundamentally indestructible you see. It shouldn’t be possible to manipulate using earth magic. If it was a dungeon made from the bare earth then he might be able to make do though.”

In other words, doesn’t that mean that he’s completely useless in this dungeon? He’s a mage so he isn’t suited for close combat magic, and he can’t use anything except his specialty earth magic.

“He is also a demon, so although I haven’t seen him use it, he should be able to use darkness magic as well. Only, many of the monsters in this dungeon are undead, so the effect of darkness magic is weak. Well, honestly... isn’t it impossible for him?”

He *is* technically a coworker, but for her to say that so easily... You must really hate him, huh, Leonora. It felt like my face was going to spasm, so I was trying to keep myself expressionless, while I turned to Dark God Anbaal instead.

“Didn’t they pick the wrong guy?”

“Ahh? Like I know. All I did was tell the current Demon King to go conquer the dungeon. I didn’t say a thing about who to send.”

In other words, the Demon King—Leonora’s father made this kind of selection? You’d expect him to be able to grasp the ability of his direct subordinates, but why did he do something like sending such an ill-suited person? If the Four Heavenly Kings are equal, then he could have just dispatched one of the members with abilities suited for conquering the dungeon.

Searching for an opinion, I once again turned to Leonora, paying careful attention not to look her in the eyes.

『Shitt, WHY!? WHY ISN'T MY MAGIC WORKING!?!』

“Fumu, Esteemed Father’s intention, you ask...? Let’s see, perhaps he wanted to sacrifice the most useless guy.”

I get the feeling that Leonora’s remarks are unusually poisonous today. Just what kind of courting did he do?

But if calling him a sacrifice means that there’s something to be gained through this, then I have to wonder. Honestly speaking, it just looks like they don’t have any intention of seriously conquering this dungeon but... Wai-, could it be that I was right? If the demons weren’t assertively trying to conquer the dungeon, but were instead just acting like they were fulfilling their duties by sending in one of the Four Heavenly Kings, then I can assent to this.

It’s true that considering the details of the time that I became a divine, the Demon Race should be quite afraid of me, so it might be natural that they can’t quite get into conquering this place. I did half-destroy a mountain after all.

But Leonora... if that’s true, then you making that remark here is a big problem, you know.

“So what? That guy decided to ignore my instructions or something?”

“Eh-...!? T-, T-, T-, That would be unthinkable!”

Right – if the demons aren’t assertively trying to conquer this dungeon, then they’re going against Dark God Anbaal’s orders. Hearing his words, and realising this, Leonora immediately turned

blue.

“Then what?”

“Eh-, ah-, umm... Right! It’s scouting! It may be true that it is impossible for that guy to conquer this place, but he was sent here as a scout in order to raise the chance of victory for the main force sent later on!”

While panicking and wiping her cold sweat, Leonora somehow managed to give an excuse to Dark God Anbaal. I get the feeling that she had so much vigour that it felt less persuasive instead, but she probably doesn’t have the composure to think about that right now.

“Well, that’s fine then.”

I’m not sure if he was just overwhelmed by her vigour, or if he actually bought it, but Dark God Anbaal accepted her words and backed down.

It’s unclear what the Demon King was really thinking when he sent Ijido here by himself, but now that she made that sort of declaration to the Dark God, they’ll need to invest some real war power into a later force if they want to prove to him that they weren’t disobeying.

『GUAHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!?!』

Ah-, the small fry got done in.



『Hmph, I was just coincidentally on my off-game yesterday.』

Who on earth is he even making his excuses to?

Ijido who had easily collapsed yesterday, had come the next day to challenge the dungeon again. Normally a fallen challenger takes a while to rest, so I couldn’t help but admire his sturdiness.

Also, unlike yesterday when he challenged the dungeon, this time Ijido was accompanied by 10 earthen dolls of about his size. They’re probably the golems made from earth magic that Leonora mentioned

yesterday.

Certainly, even if you can't use the ground in the dungeon, you can solve the problem by using magic before you enter it. He probably also reflected on his failure yesterday, and came up with some sort of plan.

But still, I didn't expect to see the this feat of controlling 10 golems at once. As expect of one of the Four Heavenly Kings, perhaps I should say. If he can produce golems from the earth without end, then leaving aside when he's inside a dungeon, it's easy to imagine that he's quite a powerful combatant outside.

『Hah! If I can just use my magic, then a dungeon like this is a piece 'a cake.』

“It's impossible. He might be able to use magic, but his mana won't hold if he continues to use it. At best, he'll just run out of mana on one of the floors and come to a stop.”

As usual, Leonora immediately cut him down. Seriously, what the heck did he do? I'm a bit scared to ask, but I really do want to know.

“It seems like you hate him quite a bit, but what kind of courtship was it?”

“‘What kind of courtship’, huh? He said stuff like 『Be my woman.』 while looking at me with filthy eyes, and touching me all over the place, you see. I dealt with it, but honestly speaking I was unbearably angry.”

Sexual harassment, huh... It's true that I can't think of that fondly either. But still, Leonora is the daughter of the Demon King. He has some guts to do something like that to a member of the royal family. I guess you can call him quite a big-shot in a way.

『Gufu-...』

Ah-, looks like he's already run out of mana. That was unexpectedly fast.



『It was all just a test up 'til now. This time I'm serious.』

Today, he managed the achievement of challenging the dungeon three times in a row. I don't know whether I should praise him, or whether I should be astounded. He started saying things that sounded like a child's excuse, but honestly, what the heck is giving him all this encouragement?

Also, in exchange for yesterday's golems, this time he had a big sack on his back, and looked like Santa Claus.

I was wondering that on earth he had in there, but the answer to my question was made clear once he encountered some monsters.

『Hah! Eat this!』

Throwing out the contents of his sack, a large amount of earth spread out. And then, after his chant, the earth rose up into a humanoid form. I see. Yesterday his mana wouldn't hold because he was always manipulating the golems, so this time he's going to carry it when he isn't using it? It's a simple idea, but it does seem like he'll be able to maintain his mana this way. It's super simple though. And also uncool though.

“Anri! I need a favour!”

As I was watching Ijido's moving struggle, Leonora threw open the door and entered the room. Livid with anger, it was like anger was coming out from her entire body. And then, when she saw Ijido on the screen, that flared even more violently.

Leonora clamped her hands on my shoulders, and without making eye contact, glared strongly at me.

“I need a favour. Smash that guy to the bone.”

Owowowow!? Hey-, Leonora, you're gripping me too hard.

“Did something happen?”

It seems that she hated him to begin with, but today was too different than all the other times so far. Wondering what was up, I tried asking Leonora.

“I asked my homeland you see, but apparently if Ijido manages to

conquer the dungeon, then Esteemed Father would accept our engagement.”

I see. Is that why he’s been so abnormally fired up? If not only you could obtain the woman you wanted, but on top of that could obtain the political power from marrying the Demon King’s daughter, then I can understand why you would be desperate.

I can only think of the Demon King’s statement as something he said with full knowledge that it was impossible, but it seems that in her anger, Leonora lost the ability to judge things calmly.

“As somebody born to the royal family, I have no intention of denying a political marriage. I won’t deny it, but even so, what I hate I hate, and I can’t imagine that marrying that guy will benefit the country. So please, stop that guy.”

Putting even more power into the hands on my shoulders, I heard creaking noises. I wouldn’t be able to bear with my shoulders being broken like this, so I nodded again and again in panic until I somehow got her to release me.

Even if I left him alone, I don’t think that he’d be able to conquer the dungeon, but I need to do something to make Leonora accept it as well. Steeling my heart, I took out a single book of scriptures, and teleported it in front of him.

『Mn? The heck is this?』

Namu.

Wind: “Ijido fell, huh.”

Water: “Hmph... He was the weakest amongst all four of us.”

Fire: “Not even making it as far as the boss is a shame to we demons...”

Or rather, he isn’t dead, you know. He’s just worried about his bald patch, and hiding away somewhere.

Personally, I would be grateful if he stayed there forever, though.”

Chapter 12 – A Moment Before the Storm

The next day, the regrettable Heavenly King became a new victim, and the odd lull in dungeon capturing continued. Of course the normal customers were constantly coming, but special challengers like the Heroes or the Four Heavenly Kings weren't coming. As expected, the difficulty level of this dungeon was apparently too high for normal adventurers, because not a single person made it to the 10th floor.

To begin with, the very first condition of challenging this dungeon is having some way to deal with the miasma, so from that point alone the number of challengers was limited. Apparently dealing with this dungeon's level of miasma is difficult unless you're a fairly experienced cleric.

Although, I can't imagine that the Light God and Dark God will stay quiet like this, so it would probably be better to consider this the calm before the storm.

And since I had some time to relax and calm down... I noticed the problem:

Why on earth am I even having this match?

I had wanted to avoid having all of the Administrator work pushed onto me, but the moment that we agreed that balance was needed, it wouldn't have really been a problem if I had a little bit more work than the others. No, rather, once you consider this country, having more influence would be better, so you could even say it would have benefited me to have a bit more.

But instead, I went too far with reflexively pushing back onto Sophia and Anbaal, and everything got confusing. Thinking about it now, it was just needless effort.

But still, I really would hate having everything pushed onto me, and still want to win if possible. Thinking about it, I might have quite a large side of me that hates losing. At the very least, I still have no intention of giving up my win.

Only, since things have finally calmed down, I decided to deal with a number of things that I'd been neglecting.

First of all, what I wanted to do before anything, was change my clothes.

Even though I finally escaped from the equipment curse, I was told by Leonora that as the symbol of a religion, I shouldn't change my clothing too much. Because of that I've continued to wear the same clothing.

But considering how different Sophia's real clothing is compared to her statue, I started to think that it wouldn't really matter even if I changed, so today I decided to change my clothes.

And while I was at it, since I wasn't using my tantou either, I left it aside and decided to keep something less crazy with me for self-defence.

...I only realised afterwards that after an hour, it would transform from the blessing anyway.

After it was bestowed my divine protection, the clothing changed into a jet black shoulderless dress with black rose decorations; a design that was a little bold and adventurous for me. I had wanted to wear something other than black once in a while, but after the divine protection, it just changed to pitch black again. I'm pretty sure that my clothes would change to black no matter what the original colour was, so I had no choice but to reluctantly give in.

For self-defence, I had chosen a fan to replace the tantou.

"Status."

Name: Anri

Race: Divine Race

Sex: Female

Age: 18

Job: Administrator

Level: 1

Title: Evil God of Fearful Trembling, Dungeon Master, Third Administrator

Mana: 42039845

Skills:

- Evil God Aura (Lv.5)
- Mystic Eyes of Wicked Authority (Lv.5)
- Divine Enchantment (Lv.7)
- Abnormal Status Resistance (Lv.9)
- Darkness Magic (Lv.9)
- Item Box (Lv.9)
- Dungeon Create (Lv.7)
- Administrator (Lv.5)

Equipment:

- Fan of Calamity
- Dress of the Black Death Rose
- Babydoll of Depravity
- Scanties of the Succubus
- Pumps of Darkness

Miko:

- Tena

Mn, it properly changed. ...Mn?

It's been a while since I last looked at my status, but I get the feeling that the mana points have gone up quite a bit. Could it be that a god's mana points rise and fall with their faith? I can't think of anything else that might have caused my mana points to rise, so it's hard to think of it as being anything else.

I'm not going to care about the names of the fan and dress anymore, so I'll leave that alone.

"It matches you, Anri-sama."

"Fumu, not bad."

"It suits you, Anri."

"Anri-sama, so pretty."

Since I finally got to change, I went and showed everyone, and all of the girls gave me a positive reply.

“—————Heh.”

As expected, Anbaal looked a certain part, and snorted in ridicule. I expected as much from him, so I'm not really that angry.

“Oohh, how splendid. We must let the world see your esteemed form. Right, since this is a wonderful occasion, let us construct a statue of you the height of the temple!”

Please don't.



The second thing that I had wanted to do was change the settings for my 『Authorities』.

Sophia and Anbaal told me before that if I set my 『Authority』 of “fear” correctly, then I could gain faith even if the fear wasn't directed at myself. I'd been busy with various things and never got the chance to try it, but it *is* something important linked to the fullness of my stomach, so I want to collect faith from as many avenues as possible.

“Administration.”

When I activated the skill, the same menu as last time appeared.

Menu: Authority Activation
Intelligence Perusal
Divine Enchantment
Divine Revelation

Thinking “Authority Activation” in my mind, another window appeared.

Main: Fear
Sub: Undefined
Free

In the 『Main Authority』 column it had “Fear”, and since I didn’t have a 『Sub-Authority』 yet, it was undefined. Since there are a lot of 『Free Authorities』, that’s probably why they didn’t show it here. I chose the “Fear” under 『Main Authority』, and the display changed.

Faith Collection: Inactive Emotion Adjustment

Apparently there were only two things I could do with the “fear” Authority. Speaking of which, I do get the feeling that Sophia mentioned how emotion-type Authorities couldn’t do much.

Going by the name “Emotion Adjustment”, I suppose I can increase or decrease the “fear” emotion. That’s fine in and of itself, but the problem is the range of targets.

If you consider Administrators as the administrators of “the world”, then if I stupidly tamper with it there’s the chance that I’ll mess with the emotions of every living being in the world. Just one mistake could turn the world into a dystopian hell of terror where everyone is controlled by their emotions, so I decided not to mess with it.

Right now the important one is “Faith Collection”. Since it’s inactive right now, that’s probably why I’ve only been getting the faith from the fear directed at myself.

I changed the status of the Faith Collection.

“...?”

I had expected that I would immediately feel full after changing it, but there was basically no change at all. No, I mean, it does feel like it increased a tiny bit, so I can’t imagine that it was a failure. What’s going on? Even though I was supposed to be able to collect faith from all the fear in the world, why is there so little cha-... Wai-, it can’t be.

No, no, that can’t be.

I’m sure there’s some mistake.

It can’t be that “to begin with, almost all the fear in the world was directed at me” right? That can’t be. If it was, then I’m confident that I would feel more depressed than ever since coming to this world.

Well, although I said ‘since coming to this world’, thinking about it again, I haven’t ever been depressed since being tossed into this place. If I had to find *something*, then basically just the time with Vnee.

Normally you’d want to go home after being forcefully sent to another world, but strangely I never felt homesick. Thinking about it, even before I became a divine, I get the feeling that I almost completely stopped thinking about my old world—



For some reason thinking about it made my head hurt, so I changed gears, and dealt with the third thing that I had wanted to do.

Number three was dealing with the two gods that had continued to stay in my temple; Sophia and Anbaal. Although I say ‘dealing with’, I had given up on driving them out on the very first day, and I can’t imagine they’d be admirable enough to pay rent either. To begin with, they probably don’t even have money. So instead, I decided to make them useful some other way.

The most valuable thing they have is their influence. Because the Light God had revealed to the public the existence of the Dark God, as well as the fact that the Evil God was a completely different being, the headquarters of the Church of Sacred Light, the Luxiria Theocracy, suffered a major blow. What’s more, the Origin Faction that originated in the Kingdom of Fortera began to spread through the neighbouring countries as a result. Also, even if Sophia is interested in the prosperity of humanity as a whole, she isn’t interested in the disputes within the religious factions, so apparently she wasn’t thinking of intervening.

As for how to use their influence in the best way for this country, it would probably be the mediator between the other countries. Even if it’s obviously impossible with the Luxiria Theocracy, if it’s the Kingdom of Fortera who declared neutrality, even having diplomatic relations would be possible. For the demon side, right now we aren’t hostile to each other, and since there’s a link thanks to Leonora as well, if the Dark God certified it, then the possibility of dealing with each other normally is high.

“And so, mediate for us.”

“I am fine with that, but...”

“So troublesome.”

It seemed like Sophia would cooperate, but Anbaal made an unwilling expression. But apparently he just found it plain troublesome, and wasn't against the idea of mediating itself.

“It's the hotel fee for staying here.”

“Tsk, aight, aight. I'll tell em.”

Alright. Diplomacy GET. At least, that's the plan.

The Human Race and Demon Race are enemies so they can't deal with each other directly, but they might be able to trade through us. There are probably lots of things that you can only get in either territory, and as long as there isn't any hostility, there would probably be merchants who would want to trade too.

We'll probably get a great profit margin as the middleman too.

“Speaking of which, there's something I'd like to ask you, Sophia.”

“Ask me? What is it?”

“Would it be possible for you to get rid of Lili's slave status?”

I had thought that perhaps I could get rid of it myself once I had the right 『Authority』, but then I realised that Sophia could do it immediately.

“Release her from her status? As I have the 『Authority』 for the 『Human Race』, it is possible.”

“If possible, I'd like you to remove it.”

“I see... I understand. Very well. The master does not seem to be anywhere in sight, so this should not trouble anyone, and I like her as well, so I shall do so afterwards.”

That's great. I think one of my problems has been solved.

“Yanno, you said that your believers think that you ate this brat,

yeah? If they think she's dead, then the master ain't gunna complain. But still..."

"What?"

Anbaal looked my way with a meaningful expression.

"Nah, I was just thinkin' that considering you're a man-eating god to them, it's surprising that your followers haven't run away."

"..."

I can't deny it. Normally people would be scared about being put in the same cage as a man-eating tiger.

But well, the only one who speaks to me directly is the Pope, so maybe the other followers don't really feel a sense of reality about me, so they don't feel the danger.

As for the Merry Pope, far from being scared, I get the feeling that he's say "It would be the acme of honour to be eaten by you, Anri-sama! Please go ahead, and enjoy me from wherever you please!" or something.

I'm not going to eat him, okay.

Chapter 13 – Immature

Apparently the calm before the storm has ended.

The opening to the storm began with a party of 6 challengers invading the dungeon. In terms of numbers the party size was a little large, but by no means were they the biggest yet. But this was definitely my first time seeing a mixed human and demon party. Specifically speaking, it was a party of 3 humans, 3 demons, with 3 male demons, while the human side had 2 male and 1 female.

Because one of the humans was a person I'd already seen two times before; Hero of the Holy Sword, Arc, I felt it odd that his party members had changed and inspected their statuses. What I found were shocking names.

Hero of the Holy Spear, Lionel, and Hero of the Holy Bow, Orlaine.

...To think it would be an all-Hero party.

Incidentally, Lionel was a frivolous looking young man with long blue hair, braided only on the left, whilst Orlaine was a girl with light purple hair that came down to her shoulders.

Starting to get a bad feeling, I checked the demon side, and as expected, the names on this side were all big-shots as well.

The 『Wind』 member of the Four Heavenly Kings, Fierce Gale Knight Renarve, along with fellow Heavenly King of 『Water』, Bloodfrost General Vikuto. Finally, Demon King Eligor Romariel.

Living up to the name 'knight', Renarve was a calm young man with short silver hair, whilst Vikuto was a long-haired intellectual-looking man with monocle, and an air of hidden cunning to him.

And the man whose identity was obvious from a glance at his title... A rough looking older gentlemen, the Ojisama who was both Leonora's father, and His Majesty the Demon King. In regards to the fact that he was a short-haired man with a good build, he was the same as the regrettable Ijido from the other day, but the difference in presence was obvious.

An impossible party with three Heroes, the Demon King, and his two close associates; there's basically one thing I want to say about this.

“So immature.”

“It ain’t against the rules.”

“We just used revelations to gather them, after all.”

I know. I don’t think it’s breaking the rules or anything. That’s exactly why I called it “immature”.

“It isn’t against the rules, but the winner is the one who gets their hands on the 『Proof of Capture』. Even if it’s a mixed party, only one of them can be the winner.”

“We understand this. However, nothing will begin unless the dungeon is conquered first.”

“Once they get to the 30th floor, they can just decide the winner among themselves.”

I see. So since they thought that at this rate nobody would be able to conquer the dungeon, until the party passes a certain number of obstacles, they’ll be temporarily working together? In the end they’ll need to battle it out to decide on the 『Proof of Capture』, but until then, it makes sense that they would join the strongest of each faction together.

“But the atmosphere kind of dangerous, you know.”

I called it a 6-man party, but they were separated into the Hero side and Demon King side, and were currently glaring at each other. Rather than calling that a party, I can’t see it as anything but enemies.

“Ahhh... Well, cause they’re Heroes and the Demon King, yanno. Something of that level can’t be helped. I *did* give them the order not to quarrel until they captured the dungeon though.”

“They are mortal enemies after all. As you would expect, it cannot be hoped that they would get along.”

Well yeah, that’s true. You can’t expect the Heroes and the Demon King to get along. If it was a Summoned Hero with no ties to this world then the story might be different, but they were all Orthodox

Heroes. The situation was that they were just barely working together, if unwillingly, because of the orders from the two gods. In terms of ability, they're at the top of the humans and demons in this world, but I think they'll need teamwork to conquer the dungeon.

Finishing my conversation with Sophia and Anbaal, I looked towards the one other person here.

"Is that your dad, Leonora?"

"Yeah, that's right. My father, as well as His Majesty the Demon King. I heard that the main force would be coming to conquer the dungeon, but to think that Esteemed Father himself would be..."

Apparently Leonora hadn't heard either that the Demon King himself would be coming here.

"And the other two are the Heavenly Kings I heard about earlier?"

"Yeah, 『Wind's』 Fierce Gale Knight Renarve, and 『Water's』 Bloodfrost General Vikuto. Renarve is a knight serving as Esteemed Father's Royal Guard Captain, while Vikuto is the Prime Minister in charge of government affairs."

"So they have jobs outside of being the Four Heavenly Kings I see. What about you, Leonora?"

"Me? I am away from the country at the moment, but I serve as Esteemed Father's assistant. However, in my case, rather than doing my job, the meaning is closer to learning the things required for when I succeed the throne myself."

Speaking of which, she was the next Demon King, wasn't she. In that case it isn't strange that she was learning about that sort of stuff while she was young.

While thinking about that, I suddenly remembered the last Heavenly King who hadn't been mentioned yet.

"What about Ijido from last time?"

"Farming and civil construction."

It's amazing how different the level of intensity is. No, I mean, I get

that it's important too, but the feeling of misplacement amongst "Royal Guard Captain" or "Prime Minister" or "Demon King's Aide" is no joke. Well, he's apparently bad at everything except earth magic, so I suppose it can't be helped though.

"Speaking of which, all these important people just left the country, but is it okay?"

"...I'm sure that Esteemed Father has taken that into account... probably."

Will things really be okay?



Being the Dream Team if nothing else, the progression down the floors was faster than any other party so far. The divine protection of the three Heroes blocked the miasma, and the demons had high resistant to it to begin with, and so it presented them no problem either.

Additionally, although the Hero side and Demon King side were conquering the floors together, they never spoke once. The tension in the party was high, and I could tell that sparks were flying within the party even from beyond the screen. However, Lionel alone paid no heed to the atmosphere, and continued to make moves on Orlaine.

『The room up ahead has a dragon. Be careful.』

They reached the 10th floor in no time, and since Arc already knew the trick to the stone slabs as well, they managed to open the door without hesitation.

Perhaps because Arc had already told the party members about the dragon, when they entered the room they prepared for combat without surprise.

But as usual, the Hero side and Demon King side were not really cooperating, and each side took up positions one side of the Black Dragon. Rather than a party of 6, they were closer to two parties of 3, each attacking from either side.

『Let's go, Lionel! Orlaine!』

『Yeah, leave it to me.』

『Please leave the support to me.』

The Hero side had Arc on the frontlines, Lionel as the middle, and Orlaine in the backlines as support.

『Do not fall behind, you two.』

『Understood, Your Majesty.』

『Please leave it to me.』

On the other hand, Ojisama was on the frontlines, Renarve was playing the hit and run, whilst Vikuto was playing backline support.

Up until now, Ojisama had been mowing down enemies barehanded, but now he had summoned a black greatsword in one hand, and had the other hand wreathed in flames. Just like how Leonora was a magic boxer specialised in fire magic, her father was probably a magic swordsman with fire magic.

『Shall we test the waters? Take my strike!』

He lightly held the greatsword clad in flames with one hand, and running up to the dragon he struck it. The force of his attack was incredible, and the Black Dragon that should have had the overwhelming size advantage was sent flying back a few metres.

『Falling behind him would be a shame to we Heroes!』

『How very... true!』

With Ojisama's one mighty blow, the battle began. The backline support Orlaine and Vikuto fire a light and ice arrow respectively, and through the gaps created by the middleline Lionel, Arc and Ojisama attacked. The Black Dragon tried to put up a fight with its claws and fangs, but Renarve played his role in attacking it when it did, and cut down its attacks. Renarve was said to govern over wind, but rather than using his wind to attack, he instead seemed to primarily use it to support his movement and bring the speed of his sword to the extreme.

『As long as I am here, I shall not allow you to point your fangs at His Majesty!』

『Not bad, Renarve. I cannot lose to you.』

Although the Hero and Demon King sides weren't cooperating with each other, it seems that splitting into two groups and attacking from both sides was effective because the Black Dragon was confused with how to cope, and was helplessly toyed with.

『The roar is coming, fall back!』

『Got it!』

『Kuh-!』

『Too weak!』

The Black Dragon seemed to fire a roar in panic, but seeing through the preparation of the roar, Arc, Lionel and Renarve retreated and took almost no damage. Far from being hurt, they immediately closed the gap and took advantage of its opening to attack. As for Ojisama, he never even flinched and swung his greatsword face on.

『Now!』

『There are openings everywhere!』

On top of that, the mouth that the Black Dragon had opened to roar had light and ice arrows fly around into it from the back.

『GUGYAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAH!?!』

Receiving the painful attack, it screamed. It swung its limbs and tail around in rampage, but there was nobody here weak enough to be struck by its attacks of desperation, and the result was that it was attacked even more.

The Black Dragon gradually weakened, with bloody wounds everywhere. Because of the earlier arrow attack, the insides of its mouth was wounded, and now that it could not even use its trump card, the dragon breath, it already had no chance at victory. So even the dragon lauded as the most powerful and wicked dragon

was at a disadvantage against the impossible dream team of the Heroes and Demon King, huh. ...No, perhaps it was largely because of the battlefield. Had the place been outdoors, then there wouldn't have been any way for the Heroes and Demon King to deal with its one-sided aerial attacks with its dragon breath.

That he wasn't able to make use of his strong point because of the dungeon was my failure.

『...Enough. You can stop now, Vnee.』

I couldn't bear to watch the wounded Vnee anymore, so I told him to stop. The thundering room immediately became quiet.

Arc and the others stopped their attacks as well, and looked around the room.

『Let them through.』

After saying that, Vnee stood still for a while, but he eventually moved into the corner of the room and stared at them in silence.

『That voice, could it be the Evil God?』

Ojisama asked that question, but I didn't reply, and just remotely opened the doors that were supposed to open once the boss was defeated.

『Go ahead.』

Hearing my words, they looked at Vnee for a while, but perhaps giving up, they eventually began heading to the stairs.

『Let us go. The road ahead is long.』

『Understood.』

『It feels somewhat uncomfortable stopping halfway but... I suppose it can't be helped.』

『Time for us to go too.』

『Yeah.』

『That dragon won't attack us from the back or anything, right?』



“With this, the first barrier has been broken, hasn’t it.”

“Finally a third done, ey? Looong way to go.”

“Hmmmnn, am I supposed to be happy here or sad...”

Seeing the mixed party head to the 11th floor, Sophia and Anbaal let out sighs of relief. In contrast, Leonora seemed to have some complicated feelings towards it.

“Sophia, if possible I’d like you to heal Vnee.”

“The Black Dragon? Well, I do not particularly mind.”

Hearing Sophia give the OK, I felt relieved inside.

With undead or living armours they could recover once I poured mana over them, but as a living thing, I needed healing magic to heal Vnee. Since I can’t use anything but dark magic I couldn’t use healing magic on him, but if it was Light God Sophia then I thought it was possible.

I forced him to do something unreasonable, so I want to heal him quickly.

“Well then, I shall heal him.”

“Please.”

When I left it to her, her figure disappeared and then appeared onscreen. Seeing Sophia suddenly appear, Vnee growled in vigilance, but Sophia paid no heed, and used magic after raising her hand towards him.

As you’d expect from the magic of a divine, even though Vnee had been that badly injured, he was completely healed in almost an instant.

While Vnee was bewildered at having his wounds healed, Sophia turned her back to him and teleported back to the office.

“It is done.”

“Thank you.”

I gave my thanks to Sophia who had spoken casually. In fact, she helped me out quite a bit. Had she not helped me, I wouldn't have had any other method except using a lot of medicinal herbs to make medicinal soup, and then force-feed the stuff to Vnee.

When I told her this, both Sophia and Anbaal's faces cramped.

"Please desist in your pet abuse."

"That's seriously harsh, yanno."

"Anri, how about being a little kinder to him."

I'm offended. I was just worried about Vnee.

Adamantine Earth Fiend Ijido looked this way. It seems he wants to become friends...^[1]

Notes

1. the above is a line from DQ when a monster wants to join the party

Chapter 14 – Puzzle Hell

I wasn't employed in my old world so I can only guess, but I wonder if the enquiry divisions of call centres were battlefields of neverending calls.

"No, the correct answer for that question is left!"

"Like I fucken know! How bout you think for yourself a little!"

"AHH!? Why did you go left! Eh? I told you to go left, you say? ... Well, there are times like that too."

"Tsk, aight, aight. I'll have a look so wait a bit!"

While giving a side glance at Sophia and Anbaal who were being bombarded by questions, I sipped my tea.

"You two sure are busy, aren't you."

"—This is your fault, isn't itt!?"

"—Ain't this your faultt!?"

They got angry.

The floor that the mixed party was currently tackling was the floor that Leonora struggled with as well; the 11th floor Quiz Floor. It's a simple floor where you're given 10 questions with 3 choices each, and the answers give you the right path to take, but if you make even a single mistake you'll be sent back to the beginning. Because of that, you need to get all 10 questions right.

Ever since they broke into the 11th floors, they've been asking Sophia and Anbaal questions without end, and their angry yells have been flying about the room.

But well, it's not like I don't understand. After all, the Hero side had completely left out anybody who specialised in knowledge, and was a line-up filled with battle specialists. As for the Demon King faction, Renarve was a combat type, and you could say that Vikuto was the only one who was really good at thinking problems. I'm not quite

sure about Ojisama, but at the very least, he didn't seem to be doing too well with the quizzes.

This party is overwhelmingly lacking in brain power.

"Has my choice to choose all battle specialists ended up in vain?"

"Those guys are basically all meatheads after all."

"My condolences."

What's more, they weren't joining their forces at all, and the Hero side and Demon King side were tackling their own quizzes. So the discord between them really is huge, huh.

However, perhaps because their gods gave them strict orders to cooperate, they did seem to at least try and head in the same direction. There was a tacit agreement that when one side solved a question, the other side would follow them, and they progressed this way while competing against each other as well.

『Fumu, the answer to this question is this way, I believe.』

『Tsk, like we'll lose!』

『Wai-, Lionel-san!? That way is wrong isn'- ...AHH!?!』

『...Starting from the beginning again, huh?』

『Bastards, one of you restrain that fool!』

『Uh, umm... Sorry.』

Oh? They look like they're getting along unexpectedly well.



Compared to the Quiz Floor where they got the wrong answer again and again and were sent back to the end each time, with the Moving Floor, as long as you could see the place from above it was a lot easier, so with the advice of the Light God and the Dark God, they progressed without too much difficulty.

...Right, they progressed without too much difficulty. *They.*

Behind the scenes of the smoothly progressing mixed party was the tear-inducing efforts of Sophia and Anbaal.

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... So the bottommost one is the exit, huh.”

“Yes. With this, the entire room has been mapped.”

Sophia and Anbaal – drawing a rough sketch of the dungeon’s large room, and mapping the room’s arrows one by one. With the map they drew in the middle, the two of them glared at it from either side, and began wracking their brains.

“So ya get on here, and it sends ya right, then down... No good, just goes right back.”

“In that case, if you start from here... So this one was a failure as well.”

“Seriously such a bother. Cantcha just jump over it?”

“If they could do so, then they would have done so long ago.”

While following along the arrows on their map, Sophia and Anbaal were discussing the right path, but they weren’t making much progress.

“Damn, that looks tough. Want some tea?”

“—Like I said, isn’t this your faultt!? And yes please.”

“—Like I said, ain’t this your faultt!? Thanks, gimme some.”

Seeing the two angry gods ask for tea anyway, I made them some. Since they were tackling a problem that was using their brains, I decided that sugar was important at times like these, so I gave them

a little more than usual. But well, it's a question to begin with whether or not divines even need sugar.

"Here."

"Thank you very much."

"Ahh."

They each gave their reply as I passed them their cups, and then they turned back to the maps before taking a sip.

"———GEHO-!?"

"———BUHA-!?"

In the next instant, they spat out the tea in their mouths. Gross.

"S-, So damn sweet...!?"

"You, just how much sugar did you place in our tea!?"

"A lot."

I used about half of the sugar jar for their two cups.

"More importantly, is your map okay?"

"Eh? AAAHH!? The map that we spent so long to make..."

"Tsk, hurry up and wipe it dry!"

Sophia and Anbaal frantically wiped the map that was wet with the tea from their mouths, but the arrows were blurred, and it didn't seem usable any more.

"Uuu, will we need to draw it all again?"

"Sif I'm gunna... Oi, this is half your fault, so help us out."

"...Can't be helped."

I was wondering why on earth I needed to give advice on how to conquer the dungeon I made myself, but this time really was partially my fault, so I decided to help with just the map drawing.

“Or rather, if you just gave us the damn answer, we wouldn’t even need to do this.”

“No way. I don’t remember it.



On the floor where you needed to get on a mine cart to reach the door, or the floor where you needed to turn the right switches to open the door, thanks to the Light God and Dark God’s efforts in drawing out diagrams, the mixed party was able to advance smoothly. But on the other hand, when it came to puzzles that you couldn’t solve even if you looked at them, as you’d expect, the two gods were greatly troubled.

The 19th floor was exactly of that sort; there were two containers, and you needed to fill the water in them evenly.

Of the two containers that were 10 units of water each, one was filled to the brim while the other was completely empty. Here, you needed to use the 3 unit bucket and the 7 unit bucket, and even out the two containers to 5 units each. If you hit a switch, it would return the water to its original levels, so you could repeat it as much as you wanted.

“Um, is this fine?”

“It’s fine.”

I asked Tena to prepare two sets of containers just the right size. The actual size of the containers were different to the ones on the 19th floor, but because they were scaled properly, they were plenty for solving the puzzle.

Across the monitor, the Heroes and demons were wrestling the same problem, and made mistakes when drawing water to move them and stuff.

I left the four containers in front of Sophia and Anbaal, and had Tena fill one with water.

“Why must we do something like...”

“Don’t say it. It’s damn depressing.”

Apparently having already noticed that it was the type of puzzle they were bad at, Sophia and Anbaal’s expressions were grave. However, the two of them who had begun tackling the puzzle, sighing all the while, immediately noticed something wrong and made a puzzled expression.

“This scent is...”

“Wai-, oi! Ain’t this alcohol.”

Right; Tena had filled the containers with not water, but alcohol. Noticing the smell, Sophia and Anbaal began to become oddly restless.

This world was the same in that alcohol had an inseparable relationship with religions, and wine was offered at mass. I’ve never drunk any before so I don’t know, but apparently it was common knowledge that divines liked alcohol.

That’s why I thought to test it out, but I saw that the two were obviously distracted by it and couldn’t concentrate on solving the puzzle.

Seeing them, I realised that it would be a long battle, so I decided to have a break.

“Tena, could I trouble you with some more tea?”

“Yes, understood.”

It wasn’t like I couldn’t steep the tea myself, but the tea she made was better tasting, so I asked her for more. Before long, I sipped the cup that she passed to me, and let out a long sigh.

“Um, Anri-sama? Why are you cooperating with the two of them? It would be better for them not to capture the dungeon, wouldn’t it?”

Perhaps so that the other two couldn’t hear, Tena asked me in a small voice.

Certainly, just considering the match, there wasn’t any reason for me to help the two of them and the mixed party; rather, you could say it would be better for me to obstruct them. I disturbed their concentration with the alcohol, but it was just a slight prank that you

couldn't really call obstructing them.

Either way, I felt that it was just a matter of time before they solved the problem anyway, but the biggest reason was that I was thinking about the future.

"It's because having my relationship with them deepen is completely linked to our future."

I succeeded in gaining a one year grace period, but you could also say that I *only* gained a year.

We concentrated our efforts on rushing to build the shops around the temple, and this country was continuing to rapidly develop. But no matter how positive we were being about it, we hadn't reached what you would call a country. At best we had finally evolved from a village to a town. It was probable that even a year from now, we wouldn't reach the level of a country.

In that case, if we messed things up, there was even the risk that the moment the one year was up, we would fall into the dilemma of being invaded by the other countries. In order to avoid that, there was the need to deepen our ties with the other countries to the extent that they wouldn't invade, but the best way to do that was to have Sophia and Anbaal as the mediators.

I did already ask them to do so, but the closer our relationship began, the lower the chance of a foreign invasion. Because of that, I wanted to become as close as possible.

"Well, that's not the only thing though."

However, even if there wasn't that plan, it was true that just talking to them was quite fun. In my old world, I was an only child, so if I had an older brother or sister, would it be something like this? Or so I ended up imagining.

Chapter 15 – Armour of the Evil God

Observing the dungeon capture was basically an everyday routine to me now, but the people joining me always changed. I basically watched every single day, but the most frequent observers after me were Sophia and Anbaal, and then Leonora, Lili and Tena.

Today there just happened to be more people than usual, and almost everyone was gathered and sitting on chairs in my office while watching the screen.

Lili was sitting on Sophia's lap, while Leonora was waiting on Anbaal next to him just like last time. And Tena was standing behind me... or so I'd like to say, but unfortunately she had something else to attend to, and wasn't here.

How strange. Even though this is supposed to be a Home Game, it feels like I'm the Away Team.

"So Esteemed Father and the others have made it to the 20th floor today, huh.

"Took damn long, huh..."

"Yes, honestly..."

Perhaps feeling cornered by the last few days of puzzle solving, Sophia and Anbaal looked a little worn out. Well, members of the Divine Race shouldn't be tired from just that much, so it was probably my imagination.

"Good work."

"...Phew."

"...Hahh."

Hm? I was sure they were going to say "I don't want to hear that from you!" or a reaction like that, but the two just gave deep sighs and didn't react any further.

It seems that they were a lot more dejected than expected.

“So Anri, there is a boss on the 20th floor as well, is there not?”

“Of course.”

“If I remember right, wasn’t it a living armour or somethin’?”

“Mn, that’s right.”

“Compared to the 10th floor boss, sounds a lot more ordinary, don’t it?”

“Really?”

Was it ordinary? Whenever I look at it, I really can’t feel that way.

By the way, although they’re called ‘Living Armour’, there are actually two main types.

There are the living armour animated by a remaining grudge that are closer to undead, and then the living armours that are animated by magic that are closer to golems. Also, they’re titled ‘living’ but neither are actually living organisms.

The one stationed as the 20th floor boss was the latter; a Living Armour similar to a golem.



The mixed party vigilantly stepped into the boss room when the door automatically closed behind them. Orlaine was preoccupied with the shut door for a moment, but quickly turned her focus to what was in front of her.

『That’s...』

『The owner of this room, I suppose.』

In the middle of the empty room a few dozen metres in front of them stood something with eye-catching presence. Sitting with one knee raised^[1], it was a huge set of jet black armour with a height of five metres.

“Oi, wait a moment. How the heck is that a Living Armour.”

“Mn?”

Watching the boss in the middle of the screen, Anbaal questioned me with a spasming mouth.

“No, I mean, yeah, I don’t wanna admit it but it’s a Living Armour, but no matter how you look at it that ain’t normal, right?”

“It has not retained its original form, but that is orichalcum isn’t it.”

“Not just that. She freaking hardened the thing to hell with divine protection.”

The two of them were mostly correct. The 20th floor boss was an orichalcum-type Living Armour that I gave my divine protection to. Anbaal said “freaking hardened the thing to hell” but all I did was give it divine protection the way I usually do, so I didn’t do anything special.

When I summoned it, it was a set of white armour a little bigger than the size of a human, but because of the divine protection it turned black and more than doubled in size. On top of that it was an orichalcum type to begin with so it already had high strength and magic resistance, but these rose as well.

The result was the 20th floor boss—Armour of the Evil God: **Anril**^[2] Armour.

As they approached it, the Anril Armour stood up, and raised its sword and shield. Although the movements were smooth, they were somewhat mechanical. Now that its entire figure was clear after standing up, the mixed party became even more vigilant. Although it wasn’t as strong as the Black Dragon, even so it was plenty big enough to be called gigantic. And being gigantic meant that it made for an even bigger threat.

『Brace yourselves, Renarve, Vikuto. With some bad luck, it may even be above the dragon from before.』

『Yessir. I understand.』

『I see. This may become quite a tricky one.』

The Demon King side were the first to ready themselves for combat. At Ojisama's warnings, Renarve and Vikuto both kept an eye on the Anril Armour's movements, whilst taking up combat positions so that they could deal with whatever happened.

『Let's go Lionel, Orlaine! I'll leave the support to you guys.』

『Gotcha.』

『Understood. Please leave it to us.』

The Hero side took their formations as well, with weapons at the ready. Seeing their weapons, I suddenly had a question, and turned to Sophia.

“Speaking of which, what are the Holy Sword and Holy Spear made of?”

“They are also made from orichalcum. They have my divine protection as well, but it mainly focuses on the protection of their users, and does not increase their power very much.”

“The sword that the current Demon King's using is the same. But well, I wasn't really thinking about their safety or whatever, so I focused it on power though.”

It's kind of turned into an 'Orichalcum and Divine Protection Fair'. They're all the same in that they're orichalcum with divine protection, but since the focus of the blessing was different, that will probably become important. The divine protection on the Anril Armour was focused on defence so from what I've heard, it'll probably be hard for the Heroes to do any damage with the weapons they're holding. The key to this match will be Ojisama's Demonic Sword, due to the offensive divine protection on it.

Renarve and Vikuto's attacks probably won't even damage it.

『Kuh-! So hard!』

『Unfortunately, it appears that it would be best that we focus on supporting Your Majesty.』

Renarve had aimed for the opening created when the Anril Armour

blocked Vikuto's ice arrows, but he grimaced at the feedback from the impact, and immediately withdrew to avoid the counterattack. After attacking just once they noticed that their attacks had no effect, so the two Heavenly Kings immediately switched to harassment and support.

『Hah!』

With the support of the two, Ojisama began to attack. The strike succeeded in wounding the Anril Armour, but despite the fact that Ojisama's attack was enough to force back the Black Dragon, the Anril Armour simply stood on the spot and countered with a swing of its greatsword.

『Kuh-!?!』

Promptly taking the blow with his Demon Sword, Ojisama was sent flying through the air, and twisting his body, he landed.

『Are you all right, Your Majesty!?!』

『I am fine. More importantly, what a troublesome opponent. Unlike the dragon, it is not a living being, and does not falter in the face of attacks.』

『It doesn't seem that the Hero side are managing to do much damage either.』

At a loss as to how to continue, the Demon King side exchanged their opinions while they continued to distract it.

On the other hand, just as Vikuto said, the Hero side weren't making any progress either.

『So hard! This is even more troublesome than the dragon!』

『Even my Holy Spear can only make scratches like that!?!』

『It vexes me to say this, but my Holy Bow doesn't seem like it will damage it.』

Orlain's Holy Bow itself was orichalcum, but was not something you used to directly attack, and made use of mana to attack with light arrows. No matter how even the bow might have been in material, it

was something that used magic attacks, so it wouldn't make much impact on the Anril Armour.

Arc's Holy Sword and Lionel's Holy Spear were doing damage at least, but they were by no mean large wounds.

『Vikuto, do you have no plans?』

『Let's see... From what I can see, the enemy seems to react automatically to our attacks. The proof is in the fact that it reacts to every attack from Renarve and I without fail, even though we do no damage. I believe that our best option may be in having the two of us distract it, while Your Majesty attacks through the openings in its counterattacks.』

『I see. Then we shall go with that.』

『Understood.』

After promptly deciding on their strategy, the Demon King side ran into action.

Vikuto shot an ice arrow towards the Anril Armour's head, and it raised the shield in its left hand to block. Aiming for the opening below the shield, Renarve immediately ran by its feet and slashed. Of course, the slash did no damage at all in the face of the Anril Armour's defensive power. But the Anril Armour reacted to the attack, and countered by swinging a sword down at Renarve.

『OOOOOOOOOOHHHHHHHH!!』

Aiming for that large opening, Ojisama jumped in as Renarve retreated with wind magic, and he swung his Demonic Sword with all his might. The attack struck against the Anril Armour's torso, and succeeded in causing the biggest wound yet.

『Fumu, it seems like this will work.』

Perhaps realising that it would be dangerously to aim for another attack against the Anril Armour that didn't hesitate from taking damage, Ojisama decided on hit-and-run tactics and temporarily retreated.

In the end, the Anril Armour only reacted mechanically, so as long as you attacked, it would continue to earnestly respond to you.

Because of that, just by repeating the tactic from earlier, Ojisama was able to stack up damage.

Although they weren't coordinating, the Heroes' attacks served as perfect distractions as well, and the number of wounds on the jet black armour continued to increase.

"At first I wondered how things might progress, but the situation appears favourable, doesn't it."

"Yeah. As long as they keep repeating this, they'll probably win."

"Well, as expected of Esteemed Father and the rest, perhaps I should say."

"...?"

Sophia and Anbaal were watching the mixed party's valiant struggle as though they had already won, and Leonora agreed while looking my way in worry. Lili didn't seem to know what was going on, and tilted her head in wonder.

So naïve.

I had used a revelation, and gave orders to a certain person.

『Mu?』

The first to notice was Renarve. Next, both Vikuto and Orlaine noticed as they were watching from afar, and then finally Ojisama, Arc and Lionel.

『The movements... have changed?』

Up until now, the Anril Armour had reacted even to ineffective attacks like Renarve, Vikuto and Orlaine's, but now it had begun ignoring them and instead changed its target to the damaging Ojisama, Arc and Lionel.

That wasn't the only change. With sword still in hand, the Anril Armour raised its arm, and from it a number of shadow bullets assaulted the party.

『Kyah!?』

『Whoa! So close!』

『Impossible! An armour with no will using magic!?!』

『Impossible! ...That armour?』

The mixed party was shocked that the Anril Armour fired darkness magic. Using the openings from their frozen surprise, the Anril Armour swept its greatsword towards Arc and Lionel.

『Gugu... Uwah!?!』

『Fuck! ...Gahu-!?!』

The Holy Sword and Spear managed to stop it for just an instant, but the large difference in power and size sent them flying a few metres away. Lionel was unfortunately sent flying towards a wall, so he ended up crashing into it.

“Oi, the fuck you do?”

“There is somebody inside that armour, isn’t there.”

With the change in the Anril Armour’s behaviour, Anbaal and Sophia sent questions my way.

Sophia’s guess was right. The Anril Armour is an armour set that’s animated by magic, but there are two ways it can do so. Up until now it had been on autopilot mode, and was following a set pattern. Because of that, its behaviour was mechanical. In contrast, right now it was using manual mode and was being directly piloted. Because of that, it was able to adapt its behaviour to the situation, and it was able to use magic too.

However, the people able to pilot it were limited, and unless they were my kin, it was impossible to move it.

“Speaking of which, I’ve been wondering why I haven’t seen Tena around but... it can’t be...”

“Tena-oneechan?”

Right. The reason Tena wasn’t participating in our peeping party was because of *that*. As a member of my kin who could use darkness

magic as well, Tena easily met the requirements needed to pilot the Armour of the Evil God: Anril Armour. She's gentle and not really suited for combat, but to begin with we weren't killing in this battle, so in that regards, I could rest easy with her as the pilot.

The only problem was that she didn't have much combat experience, but unlike a direct battle with her body, this time she was piloting the armour, so you could even say it was better than she didn't have any battle experience. A skilled warrior might have been bewildered by the huge difference in feeling, but there was no need to worry about that with Tena.

『This does not bode well. The movements are completely different from a while ago.』

『Yes. Using the same tactics will not work. It ignores Vikuto and I.』

『So we can't distract it any more, huh. Unless we do even a little damage, it will probably not work...』

Saying that, Vikuto glanced in Arc and Lionel's direction.

Since Renarve and Vikuto couldn't damage it enough to distract it, they needed somebody who could damage it enough to allow Ojisama to get a real hit in. And the only ones there who could do something like that were the Heroes.

『Your Majesty...』

『Nu... I suppose it cannot be helped.』

With Vikuto's silent suggestion, Ojisama nodded with a reluctant expression, and approached Arc and Lionel without failing to watch out for the Anril Armour.

『Oi.』

『Demon King?』

Noticing that the Ojisama had approached and called out to him, Arc replied in wonder.

『I shall only say this once. We need your power to defeat him and advance. ...Lend us a hand.』

『Don't fuck with us, who the hell is going to... Arc?』

Lionel had reflexively refused, but before he could finish, Arc held up a hand to stop him.

『What do we need to do?』

『Oi, Arc!?』

『You already get it too, don't you, Lionel? We can't beat that thing alone.』

『That's...』

Unable to react to Arc's persuasion, Lionel fell silent. It was truth that although the Anril Armour wasn't impervious to their attacks, they could only leave scratches at best. No matter how many times they attacked by themselves, it was impossible to defeat the Anril Armour.

『Aah, damnit! I got it. I'll help out too!』

『Hmph.』

In the end, Lionel folded, and they faced the Anril Armour again, Arc and Lionel at the front, and Ojisama at the back.

『Leave the offence to me. You lot bring out an opening with his attacks!』

『I don't have a damn choice, so I'll do it, but just this once, got it!』

『Let's go!』



Huh? They suddenly started getting along...?

While I was watching the drama unfolding onscreen with a faraway look, Sophia began letting out a a voice of admiration from behind me.

“I had no idea Anri. You gave them a trial in order to reconcile

them?”

“Oh? So ya *do* have a good idea from time to time.”

“You sure thought it through, Anri.”

“Anri-sama, you’re amazing.”

Eh? Nono, what kind of merit would that hold for *me*? Or so I wanted to say, but seeing Lili’s pure eyes of admiration, it became really hard to.

Without thinking a thing, I just continued to stare at the screen. While I was doing so, a frantic and cornered voice arrived at my ears.

『Anri-sama, I can’t anymore! I can’t hold on any longer!』

The owner of the voice was Tena, who was currently being exposed to fierce attacks from the Heroes and Demon King. Of course, the one taking the attacks was the armour outside so Tena herself wasn’t injured, but once the Anril Armour broke, she’d be in danger as well.

『Well done. You can come back now.』

Either way, it didn’t seem like she would be able to stop them anyway. After judging so, I teleported Tena from inside the Anril Armour to the office we were in.

“I-, I thought I was going to die...”

Stroking the slightly teary-eyed Tena on the head, I turned to look at the screen and found that the Anril Armour was quickly being wounded now that it had returned to autopilot mode. It was only a matter of time before it broke.

The middle floors were broken through as well. I finally had my back to the wall.

The only ones left were the lower floors, so I was a little anxious now.

Notes

1. Sitting with one knee raised
2. I think you've already guessed, but the name of the Living Armour is basically a stupid pun on "unreal", and perhaps a stupid pun on "mithril".

Chapter 16 – Boss Rush

The top floors of the “Holy Land of the Evil God” were built as an orthodox dungeon.

The monsters and traps were normal, and more annoying than the dungeon itself was the miasma, but it wasn't as though there were fatal traps, and as long as they were properly prepared, it wouldn't be impossible for a high level adventurer party to conquer them.

Following that, the middle floors were completely different and were floors that focused on solving puzzles. In exchange for a huge decrease in monsters and traps, various puzzles lay in wait. Unlike the top floors, it was impossible to break through with simple battle power.

A dungeon like this was the only one in this world, and the lack of know-how on how to conquer it was one of the reasons for the heightened difficulty.

Then what about the lower floors that awaited beneath it?

It didn't have ferocious traps; on the contrary, there wasn't a single one. It didn't have complicated puzzles either. The miasma was something that became stronger the deeper you went, but that was it.

However, even compared to the upper floors and middle floors, the difficulty of the lower floors were far higher/.

The reason was extremely simple—the monsters were strong.

The monsters that appeared in the top and middle floors were stronger than those in other dungeons, but they were a miscellaneous lot that would respawn infinitely, so no matter how strong they might have been, there was a limit.

But on the other hand, the monsters that appeared on the lower floors were...

“What is the meaning of this, Anri!?”

“This ain’t what we agreed on, yanno!”

Seeing the lower floors on-screen, Sophia and Anbaal came screaming at me.

“What are you talking about?”

“Are you intending to play the fool? I was speaking of those monsters... Aren’t they unique monsters! According to the rules, you were only allowed to summon a single dragon.”

“Boldly breakin’ the rules like this. You sure got guts, huh.”

The reason they were angry was because they saw the strength of the monsters on the lower floors.

Vampire Lord, Dragon Zombie, High Spectre, Ogre Zombie... The screen depicted an abnormal scene where high level undead that might normally be bosses in other dungeons were appearing as regular monsters.

Of course, they were miscellaneous monsters that spawned endlessly, and it goes without saying each of them was a unique monster without exception.

“『During the duration of the match, Evil God Anri will not summon additional monsters. However, a single dragon is permitted.』”

“AAHN?”

“That’s right. Did we not clearly decide on the rules already!”

Right; the rules meant that I wasn’t able to summon unique monsters. With Vnee as an exception though.

But if you were asking if I broke the rules, then that wasn’t the case either.

“I’m not breaking the rules.”

“Eh?”

“Watcha mean?”

“I’m not breaking the rules, because the one who summoned those

『wasn't me』.”

Right. In the end, the rules only stated that it was against the rules for “me to” summon. It stated “Evil God Anri” in the writing. The rules didn’t forbid somebody “other than me” to summon unique monsters. Because of that, somebody other than me summoning unique monsters was still consistent with the rules.

“Wha-? Are you saying that there is somebody other than you who can summon that many monsters?”

“The 30th floor boss, my other kin.”

“Your other kin, you say?”

Right, it was the former 10th floor boss No Life King after I gave him my divine protection and made him my kin.

To begin with, as the king of all undead, he had the ability to summon lower class undead, but even after he evolved into something else due to my blessing, that ability was in good health. Rather, you could say that it was strengthened.

He could even summon a Vampire Lord who should have been the same tier as him back when he was still the No Life King, and he had these undead stationed between the 21st and 29th floors.

“It *is* true that it wouldn’t be strange for a divine’s kin to be capable of such a thing, but... don’t you feel that you are being a little sly?”

“I’m not breaking the rules.”

“Well yeah, ya aren’t, but...”

Sophia and Anbaal still looked a little dissatisfied, but they reluctantly accepted it since it wasn’t breaking the rules.

“But still, that is quite the gathering of fairly high-class undead, isn’t it.”

“The 30th floor boss is an undead, so that’s natural.”

“No matter how our match goes, it’s basically settled that your patroned race is gunna be all the undead, ey?”

By patroned races, Sophia's is 『the Human Race』, Anbaal's is 『the Demon Race』, and mine is 『Undead』 huh? I don't particularly like undead or anything, and zombies and rotting ones like that are actually something I'm bad with, but since it fits the image of an Evil God, I can't find any words to reply with.

“...I'll think about it.”

“Yeah, do so.”

“But Anbaal. As long as the undead are not high-class, almost all of them lack a will. Will the faith she gathers from them not be quite trivial?”

“Well yeah, but it ain't a big deal. Once she combines it with 『Fear』, it ain't bad, right? Undead themselves are pretty feared, after all.”

“I see. That is certainly true.”

Personally, I would prefer not to be more feared than I already am but... being feared gets me more faith, so my feelings are a little complex.

Having thought that far, I remembered a question about faith that I had been wanting to ask Sophia for a while now.

“I remembered it since you mentioned faith, but are you okay with the humans that turned into my followers?”

She's in charge of the Human Race and they're the basis for her faith, but the Pope and the humans of this country worship me instead. Wouldn't she look unkindly upon it? Or so I've been wondering.

“It would trouble me if they increase too much, but just a portion of them is fine. Moreover, rather than being faithful towards you, they were closer to rejecting faith towards myself, so the responsibility lies with me.”

“I see. Then that's great.”

It's true that they weren't originally faithful towards me, but rather that they were rebelling against the Church of Sacred Light, and I

just sort of hijacked it. As the darkness that's naturally born from light, although their beliefs were in the form of rejection, you could say that they did believe in Sophia in a way.

"Guess since ya had the right attributes as a divine, it worked out. Tough stuff. Well, I did have some problems when you first popped into this world though."

".....Eh?"

Hearing this for the first time, I accidentally let my voice leak out. They noticed me from that long ago?

"You knew about me?"

"Well of course we did. From a long time ago, visitors from another world have not been particularly rare, but even amongst them, you were by far the most different, after all. Most of them had the light attribute, but you..."

"And it wasn't even a simple darkness attribute, yanno? To begin with, even though basically all the visitors have appeared on a magic circle on our end, you completely ignored that and forcefully came in here, so you stood out."

"I was just sent in here."

It's not like I came here of my own will. I was just forcefully sent here by that Evil God.

"We understand that much. At the very least, when you had first arrived in our world, you did not have enough power to cross the walls of the worlds."

"Just as we were thinking that we'd just watch ya for a bit, ya suddenly turned into a divine, so we were pretty anxious at the time, yanno?"

That wasn't my intention either. It was all things that couldn't be helped.

"After that I was on guard more, but all ya did was gather followers, or create a country, or spread a scripture, and nothing particularly

suspicious.”

“There were some points of doubt, but it was fact that there was a new Administrator. It would not have done to ignore the issue of 『Authorities』 so we decided to come into direct contact with you.”

“You’re telling me this now because you trust me more?”

“Well, at the very least we have confirmed that you yourself have no schemes.”

“Personality sucks though.”

Quiet, Anbaal. Also I don’t want to hear that from you.

“From the way you said that, you mean that somebody other than me is scheming?”

“The intention of the one that sent you in here is unknown, after all. Did you hear anything from them?”

“...Nothing at all.”

Being asked that by Sophia, I searched my memories, but couldn’t remember hearing anything in particular from when I was sent in here by that Evil God. He didn’t tell me what to do in this world either.

“Considering that he did not contact you before, nor after you became a divine, should we perhaps consider it as a mere whim...?”

“Well, can’t hurt to be cautious, ey?”

“Indeed.”

“Got it.”

It’s true that I don’t know anything about that Evil God. I don’t know if I’ll ever know why I was sent into this world, but I’ll bear it in mind.



The monsters that appeared on the lower floors were all high-class

undead. And the strength of each one was on par with the old No Life King. Considering that No Life King was more or less on par with Leonora, the party was facing a group of enemies that all had the strength of a Heavenly King.

If it was just one battle, then the mixed party with both the Demon King and two of the Four Heavenly Kings would probably have the advantage. But once they repeated the fighting over and over, they would eventually grow tired, and it was clear as day that the disadvantage would fall to the challengers.

...That's what I thought.

After crossing swords with the monsters and then leaping back in retreat, Ojisama spoke to Arc.

『It seems that the weapons used by you lot would be more effective on these.』

『Arc.』

『What?』

『My name. Not ‘you lot’, but Arc.』

Ojisama looked at Arc's expression with a dubious expression, but perhaps eventually sensing his intention, he gave a manly smile and brandished his sword.

『Hmph, very well. Then Arc, this will be the opposite of the time with the Living Armour earlier. I shall cut open a path, so you put them down.』

『Leave it to me!』

Arc and Ojisama—

『Can't be helped. I'll support ya.』

『Hmph, somebody of your calibre is going to support *me*?』

『Heh! Aren't you the one bumping into *me* by accident?!』

『I would not commit such a blunder!』

Lionel and Vikuto—

『You were, Miss Orlaine, weren't you.』

『M-, Miss!?!』

『I shall take care of all the enemy attacks, so I would like to have you concentrate on attacking.』

『...Yes!』

Orlaine and Renarve—

Each of them paired up, and began attacking the enemy in combination. Certainly, making use of the Heroes' Holy Weapons against the undead was the best strategy. But who on earth could have predicted that these two groups that should have been hostile until just a few days ago could work together this well.

Seeing them get along so well was instead making me worry about the future.

They look so close that in the worst case, Ojisama might even say something like "Hmph, falling in a place like this is pathetic. Were you not going to defeat me?" and save the Heroes in a pinch.

Or maybe on their journey together they would realise the existence of the mastermind, or some great evil, and stand together as companions to defeat it or something... Wai-, isn't that exactly this situation?

No, no, whether it's 'mastermind' or 'great evil', neither of them fit me no matter how you think about it, so it has to be different. Leaving my public image aside.

While I was thinking about such things, the mixed party pushed back against the pressure of the monsters.

Ojisama opened a path with his flames, and Arc leapt in with determination and cut at the Vampire Lord.

Weaving skilfully through the gaps created by Vikuto's ice arrows, Lionel stabbed at the Dragon Zombie.

Renarve parried the High Spectre's magic with a sword clad in wind magic, and protected by him, Orlaine hit it with light arrows.

It was a scene worthy of being sung in legends or myths.

『Alright! Found the stairs!』

『Jump in in turn! Our objective is not to defeat the monsters, but to advance ahead!』

『You guys can go right ahead, leave the rearguard up to me!』

『Renarve, Miss Orlaine, please go ahead first!』

『Understood!』

『Y-, *You're* calling me 'Miss' as well...? Geez, understood!』

This was only the 21st first floor, and with all the floors up until the 29th, the road ahead was still long. Normally, seeing them struggle so much on the first floor, you wouldn't imagine them reaching the bottom floor no matter what. But for some reason I basically expected that they would reach there.

It seems that I might finally need to prepare myself for the worst.

Notes

1. It's a rule that the early game bosses appear in the end of the dungeon as normal monsters, after all.
2. No Life King-sama? He's still in the middle of warming up.

Chapter 17 – Imperial Death

The large doors creaked as they opened.

With nothing to block it, the overwhelming sense of presence from inside the room increased, and the mixed party faintly trembled before the door.

『...Let us go.』

With the Demon King's voice, the party came back to their senses, and their vigilance naturally made their steps slow.

Ahead of them was a throne on a platform a step higher than the rest of the room, and upon it sat the lord of the room.

Sitting on the luxurious throne and waiting for the Heroes and demons was a skeleton clad in a jet black robe. He was much smaller than the Black Dragon and Armour of the Evil God, and could only be taken as the size of a normal human. However, the people gathered in that room withered in face of the pressure greater than any of the previous foes.

『.....』

『.....』

The party advanced as far as just before the throne, but he merely sat there and gazed at them with his dark, eyeless sockets, and showed no further reaction.

Because of the feeling of pressure that he released, the party found themselves unable to speak first, and waited wordlessly.

In that tense silence that discouraged even clearing their throat, when the party was about to reach their mental limits, the skeleton spoke first.

In a voice that may well have invited death upon anybody with a weak mind, a low voice that seemed to shake the soul, he welcomed them.

『Welcome, my guests. You are the first to have reached here.』

That line was similar to his previous one, but the only one who knew

that was Leonora and myself.

『You... “What” are you?』

『Fumu. In the past I may have answered “a King”, but at present I am nothing more than a single servant of my God—Anri-sama.』

『Anri... Evil God Anri?』

The skeleton had quietly replied to the Demon King’s question. Hearing my name, the expressions of the Heroes turned grave.

『So we can take it to mean that you’re the boss here, right?』

『Indeed. I have been appointed by my God as the guardian of this room. Therefore, I cannot allow you to proceed beyond here.』

Hearing the skeleton’s words, their vigilance heightened, and they prepared their weapons.

『Hu-』

『!? What’s so funny!?!』

The skeleton laughed at them, and Orlaine gave an exaggerated reaction. It told of her nervousness.

『Not funny, but joyous, ...Young Miss.』

『Young-...!? T-, Then joyous about what?』

『As I stated earlier, you are the first ones to have reached this floor. Although it was an honour to be appointed as guardian of this place and I had not an iota of dissatisfaction, it is also the truth that I found it vexing to have no opportunity to display my loyalty to my God. And in this moment, that opportunity has finally arrived; what could this be but joyous?』

Having said that, the skeleton stood up, flicked back his jet black robe, before spreading his arms wide.

『Let us exchange our names; I am Imperial Death. A retainer and kin of my exalted God—Anri-sama, as well as the one appointed as guardian of this room.』

The skeleton—Imperial Death, gave his name, and in response the Heroes held out the weapons that could be called their symbols, and the party members named themselves one by one.

『Hero of the Holy Sword, Arc.』

『Hero of the Holy Spear, Lionel.』

『Hero of the Holy Bow, Orlaine.』

『Demon King, Eligor Romariel.』

『One of the Four Heavenly Kings, Fierce Gale Knight Renarve.』

『Likewise, Bloodfrost General Vikuto.』

Imperial Death gave a satisfied nod in response, and displayed his intent to fight.

『Now then. Come. To demonstrate my loyalty, I shall be your opponent with all my power.』



『I'm going to attack!』

『Please leave the support to me!』

The first move was taken by Orlain and Vikuto, who had begun to attack from afar. They released as many arrows as they could at once, and they rained down towards Imperial Death. However, he raised his right hand, and a round barrier appeared, easily blocking the rain of arrows.

『An opening!』

Seeing Imperial Death defend against the arrows, Lionel rushed up and aimed for the torso with his Holy Spear. No matter how overwhelming he might have been, Imperial Death was still an undead. In that case, the Holy Weapon that was effective against undead should have dealt him huge damage. Lionel had attacked with that belief, but the strike was all too easily stopped.

『I-, Impossible...』

With his right hand still maintaining the barrier, Imperial Death blocked the incoming Holy Spear with just his left hand. No, more accurately, he stopped it with just the index finger of his left hand. The brittle-looking finger bone blocked a strike from one of the strongest weapons in the world; seeing that seemingly impossible scene, not only Lionel, but everyone in the room froze. Did this mean that Imperial Death himself boasted greater defence than the Armour of the Evil God?

『If you wish to aim for an opening, then you ought not shout your intentions to do so.』

Saying so, Imperial Death reached out and grabbed the Holy Spear, before casually waving his hand. His strength was impossible to imagine from a mere skeleton the size of a human, and together with his Holy Spear, Lionel was sent flying parallel the ground.

『UOOHHHHHHHH!?!』

『Kuh-, make it in time!』

Renarve immediately reacted and ran towards the flying Lionel, before catching him. Had Renarve not been there, Lionel would have hit the wall dozens of metres away, and become unable to fight in that instant.

『Guh-, sorry!』

『It is no big deal.』

Lionel thanked Renarve for saving him, and Renarve shook his head with a smile.

『Watch out!』

『Would I let you!』

While Lionel and Renarve exchanged their short lines, they heard a voice from somewhere else.

Wondering what had happened and turning around, Renarve and Lionel found that right next to them, something black was flying their

way at incredible speed. The other voice had come from the direction of the Demon King and Arc, who were attacking Imperial Death with their swords.

Realising that they were saved by a hair's breath because Imperial Death had been attacked when he was about to fire, Lionel and Renarve got up and ran to join the two engaged with Imperial Death.

『Sorry, you saved me!』

『My apologies, Your Majesty.』

Because Arc and the others were fighting at close range, Orlaine and Vikuto had stopped their attacks and watched for an opening. Because of that, Imperial Death's free right hand turned to the two he had been fighting with. However, with Renarve and Lionel joining the frame, the situation began to change.

Perhaps because he really could not handle a four-on-one close combat battle, Imperial Death released mana from his whole body, and blew the four away to gain some distance.

『Speaking of which...』

『?』

Just as Arc and the others were about to close the distance to attack again, Imperial Death spoke before they could. Having lost the timing to attack, they could now do nothing but lend him an ear.

『Although I said that I would be your opponent with all my power, if I remain barehanded it would hardly be truth, would it.』

『What-!?!』

In front of the surprised party, Imperial Death held his right hand out. The party watched with bated breath. Under his hand, a black pole of some sort came out from his shadows. Grasping it in his right hand and swiftly pulling it out of the shadows, Imperial Death held the weapon with both hands.

It was a single-edged scythe, that was about as long as he was tall. A skeleton clad in jet black robes, holding a scythe... It was the very image of the grim reaper from the legends. It might have seemed

ironic that the undead emperor who rejected death was taking the form of the reaper that invited it, but it was probably partially because of the image I had when I gave him the divine protection.

『I have kept you waiting. Shall we continue?』

Hearing this, the party couldn't make any careless moves. The overwhelmingly powerful barehanded enemy was now holding a weapon. Nobody in the room was foolish enough to not be vigilant about that.

『Whatever is the matter? Will you not come? Then I shall move instead.』

With those words, Imperial Death suddenly disappeared.

『Wha-!? Where did he go?』

They frantically searched for him, but couldn't find him anywhere. Then in the next moment, in front of the backline support Orlaine and Vikuto, Imperial Death suddenly made his appearance.

『Impossible!』

『It can't be!?』

Cutting through Vikuto's promptly made water barrier as though it was paper, and smacking away like a twig the Holy Bow that Orlaine tried to shield herself with, Imperial Death's swinging scythe cut deeply into the Orlain's shoulder and Vikuto's abdomen.

『KYAAH!?』

『Guh- ...!!』

『Orlaine!』

『Vikuto!』

The other tried to run up to the two who had collapsed with a cry, but before they could, Imperial Death disappeared once again.

『Kuh-, he disappeared again.』

『Incredible speed... is not, what he's using. Short distance teleportation?』

『Yes, although this ability is limited to use in the dungeon.』

Hearing the words from behind himself, the Demon King immediately cut backwards without even turning his head.

『Mu-, this will not do. The one who advised against speaking when attacking an opening was I myself, wasn't it.』

Blocking the Demon King's swing with his scythe, Imperial Death laughed wryly as he disappeared.

『Kuh-, this is bad! At this rate, it'll just be one-sided attacks.』

『Take up a circular formation! We will remove our blind spots!』

Following the Demon King's instructions, Arc, Lionel and Renarve gathered together, and they stood back-to-back so that they could defend against attacks from every angle.

『Where. Where will he attack from?』

The four searched in vigilance, but Imperial Death wouldn't appear at all. Although they grew tired of waiting, they desperately tried to concentrate, when a voice called out to them.

『Remove all blind angles... huh. Not a bad idea...』

The party turned to the voice, and found that Imperial Death was seated back on his throne, with his right hand aimed towards them.

『However, just because I am holding a weapon, does not by any means suggest that I cannot use magic, you know.』

『!? Scatter!』

Faster than they could react to the Demon King's voice came a mass of darkness from Imperial Death's hand, flying towards where they were gathered.

They immediately jumped down on the spot, but Lionel who was closest to the throne was hit, unable to dodge.

『GUAHHHHHHHHHH-...!?!』

『Uwah!?!』

『Kuh...』

『Nu...』

Lionel was hit terribly hard, and collapsed on the spot with a groan. Although the other three avoided a direct hit, they still received damage from the aftermath.

『Kuh-, what strength!』

『He certainly is far stronger than any enemy before. Even if we continue to fight, our defeat will probably be inevitable.』

『Your Majesty, and also Arc-dono... I will try to block the next attack. Can I leave the offence to you?』

『Renarve!?!』

『...Understood.』

Arc raised a shocked voice at Renarve's determined suggestion, but the Demon King agreed with a stern expression.

『Are you finished with your discussion? Well then, let us continue... No, perhaps it is about time to end it. You all fought well. I shall remember this fight for eternity.』

Muttering this quietly, Imperial Death once again disappeared. Up until now, they had frantically searched for him when he vanished, but this time they just wordlessly concentrated, swords at the ready. Also, Renarve had closed his eyes quietly, and spread wind magic through the area.

『There!』

Renarve thrust with all his might towards the disturbance in the air flow. Although Imperial Death's skull made a shocked expression, as he had appeared right before the attack, he calmly dealt with Renarve's attack and swung his scythe.

If he had retreated then he could have avoided any large damage,

but instead Renarve chose to stand there and block the scythe's attack with his body.

『What-!?!』

『Guh-... Now!』

Renarve gave the signal even with his expression twisted in anguish, and Arc responded.

『AHH!』

Imperial Death tried to respond to Arc's swing of the Holy Sword, but Renarve had gripped the scythe, and unable to block with the scythe, he let go of it and stopped the Holy Sword with his arm.

『Your aim was fine, but I see you lack power... Nu?』

Imperial Death had laughed after blocking the Holy Sword, but after seeing that Arc's expression was not one of despair, he raised a quizzical voice.

『Then I shall... add to that power.』

The Demon King ran up, and smacked his Demon Sword onto the Holy Sword pressed against the skeleton arm. The impact caused the Holy Sword to push deeply into it, and snapped the arm beneath it.

『NU, OOOHHHHHHH!?!』

The Holy Sword with two people's strength had snapped Imperial Death's arm, and continued to swing down. The flash of the sword had failed to reach the enemy, but it cut into his robe, and black cloth danced through the air.

『Kuh-, he evaded it?』

『But it is a fact that we have pressured him. There is nothing to do but continue to attack... Mn?』

Arc and the Demon King had jumped back to observe their enemy, but seeing Imperial Death's lack of reaction, the two made puzzled expressions. Looking carefully, he was looking at the ground a small

distance away from him, and paid no heed to Arc or the Demon King.

Although he was much too filled with openings, that instead begged suspicion, and the two could not attack. Wondering what was happening, he followed Imperial Death's gaze, and found that something black was lying there.

『.....r』

『What?』

Noticing Imperial Death's quiet murmur, the Demon King raised a voice of question, but Imperial Death continued to stare at the floor, completely motionless. The black thing on the ground was part of the robe that had been cut earlier.

『...Cur』

『O-, Oi?』

Hearing the deep, ominous voice that seemed to come from Hell itself, the two of them reflexively flinched.

『CURCURCURCUR! HOW DARE YOU! HOW DARE YOU CUT THE ROBE BESTOWED BY ANRI-SAMA!』

『————!?!』

『————!?!』

Imperial Death began to fly into a rage, and the two of them stiffened at his intense anger.

And then, floating into the air, Imperial Death began to release incredible pressure. But although I say pressure, it wasn't the type that seemed to put force on the surroundings, and instead the surroundings seemed to be drawn into an invisible 'something'. Continually sucking and concentrating, that 'something' started to be dense enough to see... It was miasma from all across the dungeon.

The miasma was thicker the deeper it was in the dungeon, and on the 30th floor that was close to the very bottom, the air was filled with the thickest miasma. And that miasma was now being drawn into a single undead.

Imperial Death took that concentrated miasma into himself, and his figure changed into something ever more sinister.

『Looks like we stepped on the tail of a dragon, huh.』

『So this is as far as we go...』

In front of the two exchanging their words of resignation, Imperial Death placed the concentrated miasma around his scythe, and he swung.



(— - —)

Chudooon.

(eyes closed, facing up to the sky)

The scene was such a tragedy that I couldn't bear to look, so I closed my eyes, shielded my ears, and accompanied it with a sound effect in my mind.

Wondering if I could open them yet, I had a peek, and found on-screen the tattered Arc and Ojisama lying on the floor. With the collapse of the final party members, the party was now wiped out.

Wondering why there was no reaction, I looked at the people in the room, and found that everyone had their mouths hanging open in a daze. Since it was a climax, everyone was here today, but every single one of them was dumbfounded.

Seeing this, I decided to stealthily head to the exit.

“Stop.”

But my efforts were fruitless, and I had the nape of my neck violently caught by Sophia.

“What on earth is that?”

“What, you ask? It's the other kin that I told you about earlier.”

When I replied as such, Sophia gave a deep sigh.

“No matter how I look at it, that is no regular kin. Isn't he already

close to reaching the realm of a divine? That has to be foul play, right!?”

“There was no rule like that.”

“No, I have to agree with her, yanno? That ain’t something a human or demon can stand up to, right?”

“But even so, I’m not breaking the rules.”

“To begin with, why does somebody who just became a divine have a kin that became something like *that*?”

“She’s got a point, yanno. Unless a kin with terribly strong faith spends a few hundred years like that, then they basically ain’t gunna turn into something like *that*, but...”

“Well I don’t know why he’s like that either.”

I thought things would turn out like this. Since he completely ignores words like prudence or restraint, I thought that Sophia and Anbaal would get mad if they found out about him so I was really depressed when I realised that the mixed party had made it this far.

But there’s no option left to me except talking back.

It’s true that it wasn’t breaking the rules, so there shouldn’t be a problem.

Side-stepping Sophia and Anbaal’s questioning, while avoiding Tena, Leonora and Lili’s stares, I silently came to that conclusion all by myself.

Mixed party was defeated!

Anri obtained Holy Sword, Holy Spear, Holy Bow, Demon Sword!

Chapter 18 – Conclusion

The mixed party achieved the record of reaching the lowest floor yet, but the last stronghold and 30th floor boss—Imperial Death, defeated them and they failed.

Also, because they were defeated within the dungeon, there was no reason to exempt them from the rule of taking their weapons and items even if they were the Heroes and Demon King, so the Holy Sword, Holy Spear, Holy Bow and Demon Sword were properly collected. Of course, the other items and gold were as well.

And that moment could be said to be the moment that it became impossible for them to conquer the dungeon.

The source of the Heroes' strength were the Holy Weapons that held Sophia's blessing, and now that they had been taken away, the Heroes lost most of their strength.

As for Ojisama, it wasn't as though he was that dependent on his weapon, but as you'd expect, there was a huge difference in fighting strength once he didn't have the Demon Sword.

With their blessed weapons gone, they had already lost the power needed to conquer the dungeon.

And like that, it spelt the end to the match.

Incidentally, since Sophia and Anbaal demanded the weapons, I was just keeping a hold of them temporarily, and it was decided that I would return them after the match.

Now that I had collected them, they were mine, so I could have ignored the two, but apparently now that the Holy Weapons had Sophia's blessings they had the function of flying back to the owner when they called for it, and there was nothing more dangerous than weapons flying about the dungeon.

For now I had a hold of them, and tossed them into a room locked from the outside, but from the sounds inside the room you could tell that they were rampaging about. The Heroes were probably continuing to call for them without giving up.

I personally want to return these troubling weapons as soon as

possible. Considering the situation, I wouldn't be able to sell them after all, and I couldn't use them as dungeon drops either.

The Demon Sword didn't have that function and so it was behaving, but if I was returning the Holy Weapons, it wouldn't be fair not to return the Demon Sword. And what's more, apparently the Demon Sword was passed down each generation, and would one day be passed down to Leonora, so as a friend I felt that I ought to return it. But well, I really don't have any obligation to give them back, so it should be fine if I demand some compensation, right?



In only thirty minutes, it would be a whole year since the match began.

In order to check up on the 『Proof of Capture』 that I placed on the 31st floor, we all gathered there.

“The 『Proof of Capture』 is...”

“Don't tell me it's *that*?”

Seeing the 『Proof of Capture』, both Tena and Leonora's expressions cramped. Speaking of which, Sophia and Anbaal already knew, but I never told these two.

There was a round-table-shaped pedestal in the middle of the room, and on top of it was an eerie patchwork doll.

This was the 『Proof of Capture』 that I left here, and was the proxy I used when Leonora first came here; the cursed Tena doll.

Also, since I became a member of the Divine Race myself, I conquered the cursed equipment problem, but that didn't mean that the curse on the doll itself was gone. Because of that, if anyone but myself or my kin Tena touched it, the doll would be their present – curse and all. Or at least that was my plan.

It's not like I was thinking something treacherous like “Conquer my dungeon huh? Curse you!” or anything. It was a nuisance though, so I did hope that somebody would take it away though.

“There is only a little time left, isn't there.”

“Tsk.”

“Hii!?”

Although it basically spelt their defeat when the Heroes and Ojisama lost their weapons, Sophia and Anbaal never declared defeat. But at this point, as you'd expect they had no choice but to give up on victory. Sophia seemed discouraged, but Anbaal was clearly in a bad mood.

Because Anbaal was being too obvious with his irritation, Lili got scared and hid behind my back.

“No invaders are ever going to reach here in time, so I suppose your match is set, huh.”

“Congratulations, Anri-sama.”

Hearing Leonora and Tena congratulate me, my victory finally felt real. In order to pick up the 『Proof of Capture』 as a victory trophy, I headed... or at least I tried to head towards the pedestal, but I stacked it.

Having lost my balance and begun to fall, I looked back and saw that Lili was standing on top of my dress hem. Apparently when she hid behind me in fear of Anbaal, she stood on my dress by accident. Unlike the robe that I used to wear, the dress was pretty long, and if I wasn't careful, it could get stepped on.

As though being pulled from behind, while I was falling I reflexively reached out to grab the table in front of me, and somehow managed to avoid falling right to the ground.

“Are you all right, Anri-sama!?”

“I-, I'm sorry...”

Tena hurried over to help me up. And Lili... you don't have to apologise, so please get off my dress.

“Oioi, the hell ya doin'?”

“Well, it seems that you managed to avoid falling.”

Anbaal and Sophia called out to me in astonishment.

“The hem is longer than your old clothing, so if you aren’t careful it’ll be dangerous, you know. Also, you sent the doll flying all this way.”

It happened in an instant so I didn't realise, but when I grabbed at the table earlier, apparently the cursed Tena doll had been sent flying by Leonora's feet.

Saying that, she bent over and picked up the doll.

“.....Ah.”

Seeing that, Tena let out a sound. Everybody in the room heard that, and following Tena's gaze, we moved our eyes to Leonora.

“.....Ah.”

“.....Ah.”

“.....Ah.”

“.....Ah.”

Everybody let out the exact same, stupid voice.

“Eh? Ah.”

Leonora was perplexed by everybody's gaze suddenly turning to her, but she followed our gazes to what was in her hand, and after realising what it was, she let out the same sound.

“””””” AAAHHHHHH!?””””””

In the midst of this room filled with cries, the teleportation magic activated, and Leonora disappeared.

Leonora, you idiot...



"I can't accept this."

Moving to the round table in the office, that was the first thing I said.

“The winner is whoever has their patroned race touch the 『Symbol

of Capture』 first, ain't it? There ain't any basis for you to complain.”

It's true that since Leonora is a demon, it's Anbaal's win based on the rules. But I can't accept an accident like that overturning the outcome of the match. To begin with, it all began when he scared Lili.

“What do you think, Sophia?”

“Let's see. It is true that it was a sloppy way to decide things, but according to the rules, I do not think we can help but acknowledge Anbaal's victory.”

From her point of view, no matter whose victory it was, she would still be the loser, so I suppose it can't be helped that she wasn't interested in changing the rules.

I knew myself that my opinion was at a disadvantage. But, it was a little... no, it was *very* frustrating.

“A-, Anri... I was wrong, so can't you forgive me already?”

“No. Continue your seiza.”

A voice called to me from the corner of the room, but I replied a little coldly. It was Leonora, and a little while ago I had her sit in seiza to reflect on her actions.

It was partially my fault as well for having the doll fall from the table, which is why I don't intend to scold her all that harshly, but even so a large part of it was her carelessness, so I wanted her to reflect.

“Then leaving the seiza aside, could you at least take away this doll...?”

“No. Hold onto it for a while.”

On top of Leonora's lap as she sat in seiza was the cursed Tena doll. Originally the curse of the doll made it so that once you threw it away, it would suddenly come back to you at some point, but perhaps the curse began stronger while I left it alone, because now it leveled up, and would quickly toddle back to you when you let go of it. Thanks to that, Leonora couldn't get rid of it even if she wanted, and had been holding it the whole time.

“Well, you can settle things with her however you like. But no matter how it happened, win’s a win, yanno. Know when ta give up.”

“.....Fine.”

At Anbaal’s reminder, I reluctantly accepted my defeat. It was frustrating though.

“And so, guess I better hand out the 『Authorities』, ey.”

Saying that, Anbaal sat down at the round table, and a countless number of letters appeared around him. Next, the same thing happened around Sophia.

“These are the 『Sub-Authorities』 we have. There ain’t anything new we oughta add to them, so we’ll just be handing over a fraction of the ones we already have to ya.”

“Specifically, what fraction will we be handing over?”

“Let’s see... How ’bout $\frac{2}{5}$ ths.”

Each of them separated $\frac{2}{5}$ ths of their 『Sub-Authorities』, and our ratio became 6:6:8, Sophia:Anbaal:myself.

“Then I’m the only one with more. Unfair.”

“As long as it is to an extent that there is no disruption to the balance, there should be no problem.”

It’s true that we had the match because they wanted a little less, so I didn’t intend to complain about the distribution being unfair.

What I was complaining about was that only I was getting more.

The one who won the match was Anbaal, so it should have been fine if he just increased both Sophia and mine, so I couldn’t accept that he targetted only me.

“Why is it just me?”

“You’re the newbie, so dontcha need experience. I’m giving ya work outta the goodness of my heart, so be grateful.”

I glared at him, but Anbaal ignored me with a nonchalant expression. Or rather, that’s definitely a lie. There’s definitely no mistake that this

was revenge for the hardships he had with the dungeon capture. But it was in the rules that the winner would be deciding the ratios, so since it wasn't large enough that it destroyed the balance, even if it was frustrating I wouldn't change a thing even if I made a fuss.

"Well then, how 'bout we go from my Deadly Sin Types. Lessee, I'll give ya 『Gluttony』, 『Greed』, 『Lust』 and 『Envy』."

Hah? By Deadly Sins is that the Seven Deadly Sins? So they had the same concept in this world too?

But still, the selection he handed me sure was cruel. I'd better protest.

"I'm not that big of an eater."

"If a divine who doesn't even need food eats three meals a day, ain't that gluttonous enough?"

Being told that, I couldn't even go "Guu..." in frustration, but lately haven't you and Sophia been eating three meals too...?

"Then about 『Greed』..."

"No, no matter how ya look at it, it suits you perfectly, right?"

.....Well, I *did* take an entrance fee, so I guess that can't be helped.

But the last two definitely do *not* fit me.

"『Lust』 and 『Envy』 don't match me."

"To begin with, it just helps if you have a reference, so it doesn't even really matter, yanno?"

That's way too different from what you said earlier.

Or rather, if the Deadly Sins are the same as the Seven Deadly Sins, the only ones left are 『Sloth』, 『Pride』 and 『Wrath』 ...He definitely kept those because he thought they were cool, that guy.

Also, that's not following the ratio. If you say 2/5ths then don't hand me over half.

"Well then, I shall hand you some from my Virtue Types. I will give you 『Moderation』, 『Thrift』 and 『Endurance』."

Whoa, whoa, it's weird once you mix it in with the Deadly Sins. You can't have both 『Gluttony』 and 『Moderation』 after all.

Also that means she left behind 『Diligence』, 『Chastity』, 『Compassion』, 『Humility』; all the good sounding ones for herself.

While I was in blank amazement at how unreasonable it was, the letters floating around Sophia and Anbaal flew towards me.

Do not want. Do not want, I said.

“Well then, next are the Living Being Types, huh...”

Wait, please wait. At this rate, something outrageous is going too...



A few hours later, ignoring me as I lay burn out over the table, Sophia and Anbaal left the room with satisfied expression after completing pushing 『Authorities』 onto me.

“Um, Anri-sama... Are you all right?”

“I'm... not.”

Raising my head in bother, I looked at the words floating around me. They were completely random. Governing over such a hodgepodge of 『Authorities』, I don't even know if I can be called the Evil God anymore.

In the end, Anbaal said “Since you made this whole bloody mess, this suits ya just fine.” and left the word 『Chaos』 in front of me, so I was completely angry.

『Gained title “Odd God”』.^[1]

I heard the 『System』's voice for the first time in a while, but 『Odd God』? What the heck is 『Odd God』.

You're supposed at least make it “Chaos God”, right!?

How on earth am I supposed to get rid of this irritation.

“Ummm... C-, Can I stop with the seiza soon?”

And while I was thinking that, what reached my ears was the voice

of Leonora, who had been sitting in seiza for the entire time. It seems that the numbness in her legs had just about reached the limit, and just stirring a little would send incredible stimulation down her legs, so she was stuck frozen solid unable to move.

Speaking of which, the reason this happened was half her fault, wasn't it.

Finding a place to point my sword, I smiled darkly inside, before reaching my fingers out to her legs.

Notes

1. TL: Odd God, or 『変神』 is read as 'henjin' – it sounds exactly the same as for the word 変人 (weirdo), so it's basically the same as calling her a weirdo.

Chapter 19 – The Evil God’s Temptation

When I came to, I was in a pitch dark place with not a single source of light.

Being a place that I had memory of, I checked my clothes in a fluster. ...Thank goodness, I’m still wearing them.

The sound of clapping reached my ears, and when I turned that way, there stood the person I expected.

A boy with long black hair... The Evil God that sent me into this world.

“Yo, ‘s been a while.”

With his usual mocking smile, the Evil God spoke to me.

“What do you want?”

“So cold. Even though it’s our touching reunion.”

This isn’t a joke. At the very least, I’m not touched in the slightest. Thinking about it, all of the hardships I went through this year were mostly because of the Evil God in front of me. Truly a god of misfortune.

Being called into this place with this kind of timing gives me nothing but a bad feeling about this.

“Well whatever. The reason I called you here today was just as my earlier applause indicated – I wanted to offer my gratitude and reward for your achievements so far.”

“Gratitude and reward?”

Hearing these unexpected words, I accidentally asked him again. And what does he mean by achievements so far?

“First is my gratitude. It was terribly fun watching you do things. It was just a whim of an idea, but I’m really glad I sent you into this world.”

Jerk.

I had faintly noticed it, but it seems that I really am a toy to this Evil God.

“To begin with, why did you even send me there?”

“If you’re asking why I sent a servant in, then it was to make use of the floating faith to create a kin. As for why it was you, well, you seemed like you’d be interesting.”

“In other words, the fact that I joined the Divine Race was all predetermined?”

“Nah, you’re wrong. It’s true that I made it easier for you, but even I didn’t know if you would become one or not. I was actually pretty surprised you know? To think that you’d become a divine *that* quickly. Even I didn’t expect it.”

Hearing his reply, I felt a little relieved. If all my actions so far were just dancing on the palm of his hand, honestly speaking, it would have been a major shock.

“And, what would you have done if I hadn’t become a divine?”

“Nothing really? If that time came, then I was gunna think about it then. If you became one then great, I thought, but it’s not like I absolutely needed you to become one.”

I got treated pretty casually, but I’m not particularly angry.

“Is there some merit to creating kin?”

I have Tena and Imperial Death as kin, but they’re useful because they’re my allies. To the Evil God in front of me, I may be his kin, but I don’t intend on serving him, and I don’t intend on doing anything for him either.

Just what kind of merit would there be in creating a kin like me?

“The number of your kin and their quality is like a status symbol, you know. It’s better to have more than less, better to have divines than apostles, and better to have chief gods than stray gods. There’s more value that way. In that sense, given that you have the

hegemony in this world, you're pretty valuable."

"Have the hegemony?"

Was he talking about the match with Sophia and Anbaal? I lost though.

"Well, there were some developments far beyond expectations, but in the end you gained a lot of 『Authorities』, so it's fine to say you have the hegemony in this world. What's important is the result, not the process, so I don't care who you guys decided won and lost."

It's true that because I lost the match and had a lot of work pushed onto me, I had the most 『Authorities』 of us three gods.

"And so, since I saw you working so hard, I thought that I'd give you a little reward."

"Like I said, reward?"

"Yep. So anyway, about the reward in question... if you want, I can turn you back into a human, and teleport you to Earth."

————!?

Hearing these completely unexpected words, I caught my breath. I can turn back into a human? And not just that, I can go back to my original world?

"Not a bad offer, right? Either way, it'd normally be an impossible reward. If you don't take it now, there won't be a second time, okay?"

The Evil God spoke as though pressing me for an answer, but my mind was in so much chaos that I couldn't really comprehend his words. I tried desperately to calm myself down, and voiced my doubt.

"Even though your objective was to create a kin, is it okay for you to turn me back into a human?"

From our conversation just now, his goal was to create high quality kin, and I achieved that by turning into a divine. But now he was

saying that he would turn me back into a human as a reward, and I could only see it as putting the cart before the horse.

“I say turning you back into a human, but strictly speaking it’s splitting your 『Divine Self』 and your 『Human Self』 I guess. Just leaving the 『Divine You』 is plenty as my kin.”

I have no idea how he’d even do something like that, but looking at how casually he said it, he probably really can.

I’ll be able to return to being a human...?

“If the 『Divine You』 stays in this world as my kin, I don’t really need the 『Human You』. Like I said earlier, if you want, I’ll teleport you to Earth.”

Not only returning to being a human, but I’ll even be able to return to my old world...

Up until now, I tried not to really think about it, but the moment I heard his words, it brought up the memories of my family and friends in my old world, and immediately the feelings of nostalgia and longing—

“However, it’ll be a one-way transfer of course. After I teleport you to Earth, I won’t accept you wanting to come back here.”

It felt like cold water had been poured over me.

Wait, that’s...

“Of course, I can’t teleport anybody other than you to Earth. If you choose Earth, then you’ll be saying goodbye to the people here.”

If I return to my old world, then I won’t ever be able to see Tena, Leonora or Lili again. If I cross over to another world, you could call that much obvious, but that reality stabbed deeply into my heart.

My friends and family in my old world, or the people that I met in this world? If I chose one, I had to abandon the other.

I closed my eyes and in my mind I weighed the two on a scale.

The people I spent many months and years with in my old world, and the people I had a short, but meaningful time with in this world.

It was painful to choose either one, and I couldn’t come to a decision.

...That's how it should have been.

But despite that, the scales in my heart tipped with unnatural ease in one direction.

It really is strange.

Even a while ago when I heard that I could go back to my old world, mysteriously the nostalgia didn't gush out.

Something was weird. Something important and defining was wrong.

Right. I can't just eat up this Evil God's words. That was the mistake I made last time too.

I still don't know if he intentionally misinterpreted my words, but everything began when he granted my wish in a warped way.

This time it was his suggestion, but there was plenty of risk that he meant something different than what I thought.

Now that I was calm, I thought back on the conversation thus far, and checked to see if there was anything weird.

"Now then, which world will you pick? Earth, or thi—"

"Why?"

"Eh?"

Discovering what was wrong, I cut off his words.

"Why did you not say—"

—"『return you to your old world』, and say 『teleport you to Earth』 instead?"

"..."

The constant mocking smile from the Evil God's face disappeared, and he turned expressionless.

Thinking about it, from the moment that we met, he never once mentioned taking me from somewhere else.

I had naturally thought that I had been taken right after the last memories of 『my old world』, so I hadn't particularly noticed.

Also, I was supposed to have been suddenly taken away from my

friends and family, and then sent to another world, so normally you'd expect that I'd want to return, but for some reason I never had that feeling, and even when I heard that I would be able to meet them, I didn't feel any longing.

And there was one more thing. Right now, I was wearing clothes. *Even though last time I was naked.* I can't imagine that the Evil God in front of me was the type who would go out of his way to strip me, so that naturally brings up the question of why I was naked the first time.

"Tell me one thing? Is the 『me』 in 『my old world』 doing well?"

".....Huhu, AHAHAHAHAHAHAHAHAHAHA!"

When I questioned him, the expressionless Evil God suddenly roared with laughter.

"Ahahaha, I'm beat. It's my loss. Good job noticing, hey? Even though plenty of the humans I'd met so far couldn't accept it even if they noticed the possibility."

Aah, his words just verified everything.
I wasn't born in 『my old world』...

"Yeah, you're a flesh and memory copy of a girl born in the 『old world』 that you call 『Earth』, and you were something that I created. It's easier to create kin who end up as divines that way, you see. Incidentally, the girl that was your original is living life normally and doing just fine."

The reason I was naked last time was because I was literally "naked as the day I was born". It wasn't that I was taken there, but that I was born there, so of course I had no clothes.

"In other words, even if I went to my 『old world』 ...or rather, even if I went to Earth..."

"There wouldn't be anywhere that you belonged, and nobody would be waiting for you either."

My original on Earth was already there, so of course. Even if I went

there, at best I'd just be treated as a doppelganger.

"If I hadn't noticed and chose to 『teleport to Earth』, what would you have done?"

"I wouldn't have cared, and would've 『teleported you to Earth』 just as you wanted."

That was so close... I almost got trapped by an option that would turn out terribly no matter what.

"Why did you try and trap me like that?"

I asked the Evil God as I glared at him. Even if I glared at him, naturally the effect of my mystic eyes weren't even a gentle breeze to him.

"Guess you could call it the final test before your reward."

"Reward..."

Is that thing still valid? But since I only just avoided that nasty trap, I can't help but look at him with suspicious eyes.

"No, no, this time I'm serious."

His level of credibility was already zero, but for now I decided to hear him out first before choosing, so I prompted him to continue.

"Having said that though, the reward is the same as before. The second half is gone though."

What I heard earlier was "change me back to human, and teleport me to Earth". If the second half was gone, then did he mean that he would grant me just "returning to a human"?

"Of course, it's a reward so I won't force you. I'll give you the choice, so you can choose whatever you want."

Certainly, it was a reward worth considering.

When I first became a divine it didn't really feel real, and I tried not to think about it, but over the last year the difference between 『god』 and 『human』 has been getting big. Leaving the Apostle Race Tena aside, Leonora and Lili are both going to age, and eventually die, but

only us two are going to be left behind.

If I said that I didn't want to spend time together with everyone as a human, then it would be a lie.

But because of what happened just now, I couldn't just simply nod either.

"Doesn't it have any demerits?"

Leaving aside differences in interpretation aside, if I asked him questions he would answer, and up until now he had never lied before. I proactively questioned him to see if there was anything out of place in order to pick the better option.

"Demerits? Let's see... Mn?"

The Evil God looked like he was thinking, but he seemed to notice something, because he turned his gaze to my side. I was lured by his reaction too, so I turned to face that way but in the darkness I didn't see anyt... no, wait, just as I noticed a streak of light running vertically, a strong light suddenly shone in from there.

Getting a bad feeling, I reflexively moved my body away from the line of light.

And when I did, in the very next instant, a beam of light shot in from it, flying past me far into the distance.

"Anri! Are you all right!?"

"I thought I was going to die..."

Where the line of light used to be was a hole from which Sophia charged in with sword in hand. Honestly, I don't even know what would have happened to me if I hadn't evaded it.

"Ain't ya doin' just fine?"

"I almost got blown away."

It's true that I don't have a single scratch though.

I replied to Anbaal who appeared next, but it seemed that he didn't know what I was talking about.

"Anri-sama, are you all right!?"

“Are you okay!? ...!?”

“Hi!?”

Next, Tena, Leonora, and Lili jumped into that dark space as well, but the moment they met eyes with the Evil God, Leonora immediately fell into a dogeza, and Lili hide behind Tena and clung to her. But well, if they can't deal with my eyes, then it can't be helped that they can't deal with his.

“Though I am late, I hastened to your side. Please command me as you will.”

Last to appear was Imperial Death, clad in a jet black robe, and standing between the Evil God and I. His scythe was already in hand, and he was prepared for battle.

It seems that everybody ran here worried for me but... things were basically over already.



“Although you were pretty close, to think that you even chased her in here.”

For now I calmed everybody down, and we sat around a table the Evil God prepared to continue the conversation.

After explaining what happened so far to everyone, the Evil God let out that line.

“We had Anri's kin Tena, so we were able to find this place by following the master-servant bond. After that was just a bet on whether or not we could open a hole though.”

“I handed my power over to that overly serious woman, and with two gods' worth, we finally got in here.”

I'm glad that they did that much to reach me, but I wished that they would remember that following the link meant that I was at the other end of the hole.

“Leaving her friend and kin over there aside, to think that you two would go that far to save her.”

“Of course. It would be troubling for us without her.”

“We finally got a person to push- ...to entrust the work to after all. If she suddenly disappeared, we’d be troubled, yanno.”

When they jumped in they seemed seriously worried for me, but although that wasn’t the only reason, let’s leave that all aside. I’m a little shy.

“About the thing earlier, if I turn back into a human, what’s going to happen to Tena and him as my kin?”

Tena turned into my kin from when I gave her the divine protection, but when I turned into a divine she turned into an apostle with me. Imperial Death became my kin when I gave him my divine protection as the No Life King, but at the time he wasn’t this outstanding. I think he broke through the barrier when I turned into a divine too. Both of them were affected by my change into a divine. In that case, what would happen if I returned to being a human?

“Your kin will end up choosing either the 『Divine You』 or the 『Human You』. If they picked the 『Divine You』, they stay as they are. If they pick the 『Human you』, they’ll probably return to from before you became a divine.”

“If I choose the 『Human Me』, will I lose my connection with the 『Divine Me』? What about the other way around?”

“They won’t be directly related, but it won’t change the fact that the 『Human You』 is a part of the 『Divine You』. Once your life as a human ends, your soul will unify with the 『Divine You』. In that sense, no matter which you pick, there won’t be much of a difference in a hundred years.”

In other words, it’s the difference between whether we continue to live as divine and apostle, or whether we live a lifetime as a human first?

From a glance there didn’t seem to be any demerits, but since he had zero credibility, I decided to ask the observers.

“Was everything he said true, Sophia?”

“I have never seen a precedent, but I believe the theory is correct. Normally becoming a human from a divine would be impossible, but as somebody who turned into a divine from a human, and who still retains their flesh body, you are an exception. If I were to add another comment, the 『Divine You』 separated from the 『Human You』 would become a purer existence as a divine. We don't understand kin as being a status symbol, but having a purer kin should be more valuable for him.”

Hearing that and turning to the Evil God, he immediately averted his eyes.

It seems that he purposefully avoided mentioning the merits for himself, but if it was just that much, you couldn't call it a demerit for me, so I guess it didn't matter?

“If I choose to return to being a human, what will you two do?”

“I...”

I asked Tena and Imperial Death. Tena seemed at a loss as to how to reply. I wanted to live with her, but I thought that it was something she should decide on herself.

“I think I really will choose the 『Human Anri-sama』 after all. I think that I would be useful in helping her with her everyday needs after all.”

“I see. What about you?”

After hearing Tena's reply, I turned to Imperial Death next.

“I shall serve the 『Anri-sama as a God』. As an undead to begin with, I feel it would be better than serving by the side of the 『Anri-sama as a Human』.”

He replied unwaveringly. To begin with, he was somebody who worshipped the Evil God, so it was probably an obvious choice.

“Now then, guess that's settled. It's about to time to ask you what you've chosen. Are you going to live as a 『God』, or as a 『Human』?”

After hearing the wishes of my kin, I was asked for an answer by the Evil God.

“I...”

Chapter 20 – The Regular Anri

“I... want to live as a human.”

To begin with, what I wanted was to live in peace. I had already come to terms with turning into a divine, but if I was told that I could take back my life as a human, as I thought, I really did want it.

From what I heard, it was just a temporary thing and I would eventually become a divine, but I can just think of it as a bit of time to have fun before the real thing.

If I can spend time with Tena, Lili and Leonora, then there isn't any reason to choose otherwise.

“I see. Well then, I'll separate you, so stand over there.”

I obeyed his words, and stood up from the round table, moving a little distance away.

“Well then, here we go.”

Together with his words, I closed my eyes in preparation for the shock. But there wasn't any shock like I expected, and instead I felt something leave from all around my entire body.

“Okay, done.”

Opening my eyes at his words, in front of me stood a person who was my spitting image.

No, rather than saying that, I suppose it might be better to call them the other me.

I opened my mouth to say something to the 『me』 who I had pushed the position and responsibilities of a god onto, but before I could, something strange happened.

O-, Oww... For some reason my limbs had a dull pain.

“For some reason it hurts.”

“I wonder if it's growth pains. When you turned into a divine you stopped growing, but now you're getting a whole year's worth.”

When I muttered, the Evil God explained it to me.

It's true that I didn't grow while I was a divine, but I was a whole year older in that time. Normally I should have grown a little. If I suddenly made up for it all at once, it wouldn't be strange for it to hurt.

It's not a sharp pain, but a dull one.

"Are you okay, Tena?"

Tena who had become an apostle was the same in that she stopped growing. No, since I was closer to fully-grown, it should have hurt for her even more. Getting worried about her, I called out to her, and she answered while enduring the pain.

"Y-, Yes... My limbs and chest hurt, but I can bear with this much."

Chest? Now that I looked closer, Tena certainly was holding her chest in pain. Why? Even though I didn't feel anything at all...

I found everyone giving me a lukewarm and slightly pitiful look, so for now I decided to hold my chest as well... The gazes became even more lukewarm. Why.



It still hurt, but it was feeling a lot better, so I decided to continue our first encounter.

I looked again at the 『Me as a God』 standing before my eyes. Her face, stature and clothing were the spitting image of me, but she really did seem to have a different sort of presence somehow. The girl in front of me was a purer divine, so I suppose that was natural though.

"I've ended up pushing everything onto you, but..."

"Don't worry about it. In the end, your memories and feelings will end up back with me. Go enjoy your life as a human."

Both of us were me, so a fight might have been inevitable, but hearing 『Me as a God』 say that made the guilt ease up a little.

“Got it. Anyway, there’s something I’d like to discuss...”

“?”

The 『Me as a God』 looked blankly at me. I wondered if this was how I looked to everyone else, and started feeling a little embarrassed.

“Give me money.”

“.....”

This was probably the first time I’ve been stared at by myself, huh. But I need to properly explain myself. When I was a divine, eating was nothing but a hobby, and I didn’t need to pay money for clothes or shelter either, but now that I was a human again, I wouldn’t be able to live without it.

The 『Me as a God』 would probably continue to live in the temple, but if I was going to enjoy my lifetime as a human, then I couldn’t just stay holed up in the temple forever. Because of that, whether I was buying my own home, or staying at an inn, money was needed.

Whether our fortune right now belonged to the 『Me as a God』 or the 『Me as a Human』 was difficult to say, but the money earned by the 『Me as a God』 was greater, so I’d be at a disadvantage if I didn’t take action right now. I needed to win this negotiation right here. She opened her mouth.

“7:3”

“Who gets the 7?”

“Me of course.”

“That’s way too unbalanced. To begin with, you don’t even need that much money as a god. 5:5”

“That’s taking too much. It was money earned as the Evil God. 6:4”

The battle of negotiation continued for a while, but mn, as expected of 『me』. She was a tough foe.

In the end, it was agreed that I would be taking 4/10 of our fortune, and in exchange I also got the Holy Sword, Holy Spear, and Holy

Bow.

Having said that though, now that the match with Sophia and Anbaal was over, I'd be giving them back to the Heroes with conditions attached. I gained the right to giving the Heroes conditions—orders—you could say.

"You truly are a..."

"Well, she's the one with the 『Greed』 Authority after all."

"Anri-sama..."

"....."

"Ahahaha, you really are funny."

While we were absorbed in negotiating, the people around us gave incredibly astonished stares.

Incidentally, Leonora was falling into a dogeza as usual, while Lili still hid behind Tena. Now that there were two people with mystic eyes here, apparently it became difficult to avoid.



"There are two Anri-samas!? Have my prayers borne fruit?"

"Calm down."

And what the heck were you praying for.

No matter where I decided to live, as long as I looked just like the 『Me as a God』, various problems would occur if I didn't meet the Pope first, so I went to meet him, but the very moment that he saw there were two of us he went as said *that*.

Well, I say 'meet', but in a sense we already knew each other, so it was mainly telling him the circumstances, but it felt like I was going to be exhausted from the very beginning.

"I see. I understand the situation now. In other words, the 『Anri-sama as a God』 will continue to bless the temple with her presence, while the 『Anri-sama as a Human』 will be living in the worldly realm."

“Worldly r-...

In the sense of separating the world that the humans lived in from the world of the gods, it wasn't an incorrect expression, but I'm not sure how to feel about using 'worldly realm' to describe a place that's just a floor below this one.

“Now then, where will you be living? If necessary, I could prepare a room on the 3rd floor, but...”

I sank into thought for a while.

Living in the temple wasn't an option. If I did so, then nothing would change. Having said that though, as a person who looks just like the Evil God, the risk of living in this town would be high in various ways. Even if I took it as a 'as long as nobody finds out, there's no problems' issue, it would probably be better to be safe than sorry.

I suppose the best idea might be to build an estate or something a little distance from town.

Thankfully I had the money needed, as well as the workers.

“I'll build an estate outside of town and live there. Could I trouble you to prepare the architects, and a place for me to stay until the construction is finished?”

“Understood. I shall immediately make the preparations. Please use the room on the 3rd floor until the construction is complete.”

Having said that, the Pope hurriedly left the audience room and left.

“Now then, guess it's about time to leave.”

“Got it. If anything comes up, contact me.”

I've got my luggage after all, and I've got the 40% of the money too. I'm all ready to depart. Well, though I say depart, until the estate is finished I'll still be staying in a room in the temple or in an inn in this town though.

If it was just for that long, then I get the feeling that it wouldn't matter even if I just stayed *here*, but I think it would be best to make the distinction after all. It wouldn't be good to prolong things and stay here.

Also, in regards to the Holy Sword, the Holy Spear, and the Holy

Bow, for a while we dealt with their rampage by keeping them in a sealed room, but thinking about it, it would just be fine if I chucked it into my item box, or so I realised. Well, I'm leaving with them now so it's too late to matter though.

I left the room, and called out to the three waiting for me.

"Tena, Lili, Leonora... Are you ready to leave?"

"Yes, everything is fine."

"Yes."

"Yeah, I'm fine too."

These three were going to leave the temple with me. But since Leonora was originally in this country as a point of contact with the Demon Race Nation, rather than living with us, the plan was to go back and forth between the estate and the temple.

Having left the audience room, I took the stairs down from the 4th floor, and headed into the 3rd floor.

This was a floor open to the followers, so up until now I basically never stepped foot here. I thought about the chaos that would occur if the god they worshipped casually descended, so I opted not to come here, but now that I was a human again, there probably wasn't any problem.

The only follower who had met me directly was the Pop, so it's impossible that they all knew exactly what I looked like. There might have been people who saw me when I became a divine, but it was a year ago and they saw me from afar too, so there shouldn't be any problems there either.

"Speaking of which, are you still carrying that doll?"

"Well, it's because you wouldn't take it away from me... Can't you do so already?"

Leonora had been carrying the doll ever since. It was already something normal in everyone's minds, so I secretly felt that it might be fine to continue like this.

Also, even if she told me to take it away—

“It’s impossible. I can’t take it off you anymore.”

“Hah!? What do you mean?”

“The only one who can remove it is the 『Me as a God』. Now that I’m a human again, I can’t take it off you.”

Right. The only reason I overcame the curse was because I became a divine. Now that I was a human again, I couldn’t do anything about the doll anymore.

Mn? Just now I feel like I overlooked something really important.

“Wait, then does that mean I have to stay like this forever?”

“If it was the 『Me as a God』 then they could probably take it off you, but we only just left the temple, so I won’t go back there for now. It suits you, so why not just stay that way?”

“Please spare me...”

Leonora’s shoulders drooped, crestfallen. But well, if I feel like it, I’ll contact the 『Me as a God』 and have her take it away. If I feel like it, that is.

While we were chatting, we made it as far as the large doors of the 3rd floor entrance. What lay beyond here was in a sense the first step into a new life.

With a little expectation and anxiety in my heart, I opened the doors. Beyond the doors was a large room, and a few people moving about. They heard the sound of the door open, and in reflex, they stopped what they were doing to look our way.

I unconsciously winced at having lots of gazes on me, but since I was a human again meaning they weren’t particularly focused on me, I pulled myself together.

—But in the next instant, everybody in the room fell into dogeza together.

Why? Or so I wondered, but an idea immediately came to me, and I checked my status in a panic.

“Status.”

Name: Anri
Race: Human Race [OLD]
Sex: Female
Age: 18
Job: Mage [OLD]
Level: 1
Title: Evil Person of Fearful Trembling, Dungeon Master, Weirdo
Mana: 3031504

Skills:

- Evil God Aura (Lv.5)
- Mystic Eyes of Wicked Authority (Lv.5)
- Divine Enchantment (Lv.7)
- Abnormal Status Resistance (Lv.6)
- Darkness Magic (Lv.6)
- Item Box (Lv.4)
- Dungeon Create (Lv.7)

Equipment:

- Fan of Calamity
- Dress of the Black Death Rose
- Babydoll of Depravity
- Scanties of the Succubus
- Pumps of Darkness

Kin:

- Tena [OLD]

So the skills really did just get left behind...

I thought that these unsuitable Evil God skills that were planted in me to turn me into a divine would disappear as well, but I just returned to how I was before I became a divine.

Or rather, thinking about it, Tena is my kin, so it made sense that I would still have my divine enchantment. I should have noticed earlier. But more importantly, the return of my titles was really half-assed.

『Evil God of Fearful Trembling(戦慄の邪神)』 turned into

『Evil Person of Fearful Trembling(戦慄の邪人)』, and
『Odd God(変神; henjin)』 turned into
『Weirdo(変人; henjin)』.
Didn't they do nothing but replace 『God(神)』 with 『Human(人)』?
Or rather, who the hell are you calling 『Weirdo』.

Still irritated, I struck at the status screen with the fan in my hand, but of course it just passed through, and the words didn't change. At that moment, I suddenly noticed that I had a fan in hand, and started to get a bad feeling.

I placed the fan down, and picked up a paper-knife from atop a nearby desk.

...And in the very next moment, the fan leapt up from the ground, and knocked the paper-knife from my hand.

Aah, I knew it...

It seems that because I returned to being a human, the curse that I should have conquered went back to how it was before. Am I going to return to the lifestyle of wearing nothing but the one outfit again?

"Anri, what's wrong?"

Seeing me troubled, Leonora still with doll in hand, spoke to me in worry.

Right, so *that* was what I felt was out-of-place. If I couldn't undo the curse on the doll, then of course the same thing would happen with my equipment.

Is this my punishment for saying that Leonora should hold onto the doll for a while?

Curses are like chickens; they always come home to roost. This was a pretty weird curse though.

I spent a while after that with my head in my arms, but in the end there was nothing I could do about it, and decided to just think of it as going back to what was normal before.

More importantly was the issue of what to do with the people around me still in dogeza.

Normal people would just run away when they see my eyes, so did the fact that they were in dogeza mean that they were more

emotionally strong than average? Or could it be that because they spent all that time in this country that they got used to the power of the Evil God?

Either way, given that floors 1 to 3 were open to the public, and the 3rd floor was the top floor among them, these people were probably important members of the Thearchy. If it was them, then I had thought that it might be fine to tell them about the 『Me as a God』 issue that I just explained to the Pope, but since there were a lot of people here, I couldn't say for sure that there wouldn't be rumours spread.

In that case, there was one answer...

“Strategic retreat.”

The ancient Chinese had the 36 Strategems, and the best of them all was the retreat. While everybody is still facing down in their dogeza, we'll fake it and pretend that it wasn't us. It's not too late to play it off as their imagination ...I wish.

Thankfully this was still inside the dungeon, so I could use teleport. I had really actually wanted to physically take the first step into my new life, but it couldn't be helped.

Having concluded as such, I activated the teleport circle, and together with the three of them, I immediately moved to the temple entrance.

Thankfully we teleported somewhere out of sight, so the worry about being surrounded by people all of a sudden ended without a problem.

“D-, Don't just suddenly teleport us.”

“That surprised me.”

“Uu...”

Leonora, Tena and Lili complained to me about being suddenly teleported, but it couldn't be helped in that situation. I paid them no heed, and had a peek through the temple entrance. It wasn't as though there was nobody around at all, but there weren't too many people. If we walked out now, we wouldn't be noticed.

“Let’s go.”

“Honestly...”

“Yes.”

“Understood.”

With Leonora, Lili and Tena, I passed through the temple door.

It was just about noon, and the high sun shone down brightly on our surroundings.

It was warm, but there was a cool wind blowing, so it didn’t feel too bad.

Breathing in the first fresh air in a while felt incredibly refreshing.

...Huh? Could it be that this was the very first time I’ve been outside since becoming a divine a year ago?

No, no, that kind of thing can’t be... can’t be... actually, it might be.

Shuddering at the realisation that I’d become a hikikomori, I suddenly noticed something odd in sight, and turned my attention to it.

There was some kind of construction going on next to the temple, and it looked like some kind of huge building was being built. But it looked somehow different to normal buildings. It wasn’t all that wide, but the height was about half of the temple’s. What’s more, since they were in the middle of construction, it seemed like it was going to be even taller.

“Tena, do you know what that is?”

Amongst the four of us, the one most knowledgeable of the Thearchy’s situation was Tena, so I decided to try asking her. Tena tilted her head at my question, looked towards the construction site from just now, and then nodded before replying.

“Eh? Aah, that construction job over there? Mr. Pope said that he was erecting a statue of you, Anri-sama.”

He seriously went ahead with that!?

If that thing gets built I won’t be able to hide my ties to the 『Me as a God』 no matter how hard I try.

No, but, the only one who really knows my face is the Pope, and if the workers haven't seen me, the statue shouldn't look all too alike...

"I heard that Mr. Pope designed the blueprints himself, you know? I had the chance to see it as well, but the drawings were splendid and looked exactly like you, Anri-sama! That person is quite good with drawing too, isn't he."

"Yeah, that drawing certainly was amazing."

Don't suddenly display your talents in needless areas.

I want them to stop this very moment, but from what I can see, the Evil God Statue has advanced too far to call it off already.

A plan as large as that was basically a national project already, and if I called it off halfway, I wouldn't be able to avoid affecting various parts of the Thearchy.

"I heard that the completed statue is planned to be as tall as the temple. I'm sure that there is a good chance it will be visible even from the neighbouring Kingdom."

I've decided. Before the statue is complete, I'm going to get as far away from it as possible. And then I'm going to live in hiding.

I thought that this time for sure, I would be living a normal life as a human, but it seems that I really am destined for drama.

Even so, even back when I turned into an Evil God, I tried my best in order to smile together with everyone.

So that's why now that I'm a human again, there's no reason that I can't try my best as well.

One day, when I return to the other me, so that I can tell her that I lived my life to the fullest,

I'll continue to walk ahead, not as the Evil God, but as the regular Anri.

"Speaking of which, Anri, what is that?"

"The original Black Scripture. I accidentally brought it with me."



<Former Evil God, Anri>

She erected an estate on the border between the Kingdom of Fortera and the Holy Anri Thearchy, and lived there together with Tena and Lili.

Additionally, those that knew of the estate referred to it as the “Black Rose Mansion”, but because the plans were left to the Pope, it ended up as an outrageously large palace.

Although some troubling issues would occur from time to time, on the whole, she was able to spend the life peacefully as she desired.

In addition, she had kept with her the authority as Dungeon Master when the two were separated, so the 『Anri as a God』 was troubled, but she had not yet noticed.

Because the Evil God Statue made her face widely known, recently she had taken to wearing a mask.

“Why does it feel like people are staring at me?”

<Former Apostle, Tena>

She served Anri after she returned to being a human, and continued to look after her everyday needs.

Although she had always been hesitant at meeting the family that sold her to the slave merchants, she succeeded in bringing herself to meet with them, and they reconciled.

A while after she had begun living at the Black Rose Mansion, she met a single young man by chance, and ended up involved in the turmoil that followed.

“Anri-sama, I’ve made some tea.”

<Former Slave, Lili>

She lived together with Anri in the estate.

Lately, she had begun to imitate her sister-figure, Tena, and started to learn housework.

Perhaps because she was used to them, she could now look at Anri's mystic eyes without running away.

"Anri-sama, Tena-oneechan, the food is ready."

<Magic Flame Princess, Leonora>

With the achievement of establishing diplomatic relations with the Holy Anri Thearchy, she inherited the throne of the Demon King at a young age.

She became the mediator for the two nations, and was adored by even the humans, who were originally the enemy.

In addition, due to the fact that she was forced to continue holding the doll and was unable to part from it, she gained alias such as "Doll Princess" and "The Truth Is, the Doll Is Her Real Body" etc.

"I told you that was wrong, didn't I!?"

<Pope Harvin>

As usual, today he was also merrily spreading the religion.

He was extremely delighted by the completed giant Evil God Statue.

Lately he had been planning to mass produce small-scale Evil God statues to distribute amongst the followers.

"Hu hu hu, it seems that the Grassroots Anri-sama Plan is progressing just fine."

<Hero of the Holy Sword, Arc>

<Guardian Sword, Zio>

<Magic Flame, Frey>

<Fresh Breeze, Widdi>

In order to retrieve the Holy Sword from Anri, they were worked to the bone on the construction of the estate.

Additionally, Arc was still in Anri's grasp, the party members were wrapped up as well

Since Arc had lost interest in the Demon King subjugation, they came to a standstill.

“I-, I can’t stand any more construction work...”

“Agreed, Frey.”

“She seeeriously worked us to the bone, huh?”

“She was an amazing person, wasn’t she...”

<Hero of the Holy Spear, Lionel>

<Hero of the Holy Bow, Orlaine>

Together with Arc, Anri made them help with the construction work in exchange for their Holy Spear and Bow.

While labouring together, a love between them... did not bud at all, and it was just more of Lionel’s one-sided approaches.

“Heyy, how ’bout you go out with me already?”

“Just give it up already, Lionel.”

<Demon King, Eligor Romariel>

Passing the throne of Demon King to his daughter, Leonora, he lived as he liked as an adventurer.

He continued to challenged the “Holy Land of the Evil God” dungeon. It seems that he was actually quite frustrated about failing to capture the dungeon.

“Mu, I thought that today would work out for sure, but...”

<Violent Gale Knight, Renarve>

<Bloodfrost General, Vikuto>

As members of the Four Heavenly Kings, they served the new Demon King, Leonora.

“I wonder if His Majesty the Preceding King is doing well.”

“It would not be strange for anything to happen to that personage.”

<Adamantite Earth Demon, Ijido>

With his bald patch healed, he returned to work.

“I’m not fucken bald!”

<Evil God Anri>

On the top floor of the Evil God Temple, she continued to administrate the world.

On occasion, she would observe her human self.

“That mask, so cool...”

<Light God Sophia>

<Dark God Anbaal>

Even after the end of the match, for some reason they continued to live in the Evil God Temple.

Their intentions were unknown, but thanks to that, Evil God Anri’s loneliness was lessened.

“I will not speak badly of you, so please stop your spying at once.”

“Seriously. Damn nasty hobby.”

<Black Dragon Vardneel>

He learnt “come”.

“Gurururu...”

<Armour of the Evil God, Anril Armour>

Unit 1 continued to work hard as the 20th floor boss.

The newly summoned Unit 2 was working hard as the guard-armour of the Black Rose Mansion.

Also, unlike Unit 1, Unit 2 was made with a female’s armour as a base.

“.....”

“.....”

<The Emperor Who Transcends Death, Imperial Death>

Because of the lack of invaders on the 30th floor, normally he served as Evil God Anri's aide on the top floor of the Evil God Temple.

Due to Tena's absence and the resultant lack of anybody to do the housework, the residents of the top floor were about to fall into a crisis in various meanings, but because of his existence as a being with hundreds of years experience, the crisis was averted.

The cooking for the three Gods who ate despite the lack of need were prepared by him as well.

Due to Tena's absence, the only ones left who could pilot the Anril Armour were Evil God Anri and himself, but in exchange, they came up with the idea of piloting the armour while riding atop Black Dragon Vardneel; the final form, Anril Deathrider. In addition, it goes without saying that he was stronger just by himself.

"I offer my Lord my eternal loyalty."

<Evil God (?)>

Today as well, he was floating about in the "Interval".

On occasion he would suddenly appear in the Evil God Temple, cause trouble for Evil God Anri and the others, and then get kicked out.

"Now then, what should I play with next?"

Notes

1. 'my pace' means 'doing things your own way, at your own pace, without heed to what other people think'. Often used to describe really carefree (and maybe airheaded) people, or sometimes people who basically don't sweat the details and do whatever.

Afterwords

Author

And with the above chapter concludes the Evil God Average main story.

After this, I intend in submitting side stories with breaks between each, but Anri's story ends here.

Thank you for your various opinions along the way, but I truly believe that I made it this far due to the support of all the readers.

For reading this, and for your support, thank you very much.

Also, I intend on reporting on my activities, but for now I will make a small announcement below.



A world governed by a Light God, a Dark God, and a slightly 'my pace'^[1] Evil God.

The religion that boasted the most power in the world, the Church of Sacred Light, had suddenly lost its influence.

The panicking upper echelons of the church decided to perform the Hero Summoning Ritual, as a sign of their revival.

However, due to the intervention of an even more 'my pace' Evil God, the summoned young man was granted a troublesome skill.

Followed about by turmoil, the young man met a certain girl, and together they opposed the absurdity of the world.

Set in the world of "Evil God Average" comes a new story. Coming So...metime or Other.

Translator

First of all, thank you for reading my translations. As always, your enthusiasm for the story and interesting comments give me the impetus to continue translating.

Second of all, my apologies for the delay on the final chapter. It was longer than expected, and I was unable to complete it last night.

Third, Evil God Average came out in Japan today. You can purchase it [here](#),

and if you have money to spare, **please, please buy a copy to support Kitaseno-sensei**. It really isn't all that expensive, and is basically a family pizza meal, or about 3 subway footlongs.

Kitaseno-sensei worked hard to keep the story amusing, and they're continuing to write even now, so please just spare a little snack money or beer money and buy a copy. It comes with pictures, and you can keep it on your shelf to pretend you're all international and cultured. It's a conversation starter too!

Imagine this; your friend comes over, and goes, **"Whoa! You can read Japanese?"** and with a proud smile, you throw out your chest and reply; **"Nope. I bought for the pictures."**

Finally, the spin-off came out today. Naturally I have picked it up. Because it takes place 1~2 years after the conclusion of Evil God Average, the first thing is to translate the Book of God side stories, as they almost all take place after this chapter.

Side Story

Chapter 1 – A Certain Religion's Fall

“The founding of a nation that worships the Evil God, you say...?”

“Heavens...”

The meeting between the higher echelons of the Luxiria Theocracy grew stormy.

The cause was that the cultists that they had sent the Order of the Sacred Light to subjugate the other day had declared the establishment of a country.

However, given how obvious it was that the meeting would grow wild after this announcement, the situation could hardly be called surprising.

There was a square desk in the conference room, and sitting around the north, south, east and west sides were the top brass of the Theocracy.

On the north side, furthest from the entrance, sat the members from the Papal Board, who controlled the affairs of the Theocracy, a Cardinal and two Archbishops.

On the east side sat the members from the Magisterium, who governed the dogma of the Church of Sacred Light, a Cardinal and two Archbishops.

On the west side sat the members from the Eparchia, who governed the parishes including matters of foreign diplomacy, a Cardinal and two Archbishops.

Finally, on the south side sat members from the Presbyterium, who governed the training of priests and the like, a Cardinal and two Archbishops.

And on behind the Papal Board, in the most prestigious seat, furthest back, sat the incumbent Pope.

Together, these thirteen people composed the higher echelons of the Luxiria Theocracy, as well as the top brass of the Human Race's

greatest religion, the Church of Sacred Light.

Each one had their own attendants standing behind them, and I too was one of them; somebody allowed to be here as the attendant to one of the Archbishops from the Presbyterium. However, in my case, the one who originally should have been here had “by chance” fallen ill, so I was actually here as a replacement.

“ABSOLUTE NONSENSE! Who would acknowledge something like that!”

“To begin with, even the very existence of the Evil God is questionable!”

The ones who screamed were the members of the Magisterium. From the eyes of they who governed the dogma of our Church, the “Establishment of the Evil God Nation” was understandably difficult to accept.

But what did they mean by the existence of the “Evil God” being questionable? ...Or so I might have wondered in the past.

To begin with, the concept of the “Evil God” was something loudly insisted by those of the Magisterium, so doubting the existence of the Evil God was at odds with the claim they made themselves.

But if you knew the circumstances of what happened behind-the-scenes, the meaning of their words would be immediately understood.

—To think that the insistence of the Church regarding the existence of the “Evil God” was based on falsehoods.

An imaginary enemy woven into the dogma to agitate the fear of the believers, and thereby increase their dependence on the Church... Was their aim—although the ones who implemented this were their predecessors from generations ago—something along these lines? Of course, to the high level members gathered here, that much was common sense, and as a result they couldn’t simply accept the fact that the “Evil God” truly existed.

“There was a report regarding the sighting of the true Evil God from the Forteran Army in their spearhead of the Order of Sacred Light, but...”

“Ridiculous. Likely an excuse created by the cowards who fled after mistaking something else for it. There is no worth in trusting impious people who tried to haggle their contribution to the Church.”

Among them, the youngest member, an Archbishop—though already in the prime of life—gave the report from Fortera, but the Cardinal of the Eparchia ignored it as nonsense.

Having said that, that Archbishop himself didn't seem to actually believe it, and showed no sign of displeasure at having his remark repudiated.

“Well, at this point, whether the Evil God is an imposter, or the real thing is not of importance, for what we ought to do has not changed in the slightest.”

“Exactly as you say. Just the words ‘country of Evil God worshippers’ is that same as declaring hostility against us... no, against all of the Human Race.”

Hearing the statement from Cardinal of the Presbyterium, the Cardinal of the Papal Board agreed. And it seems that this was the same amongst all the members gathered here.

Of course, including the Pope sitting at the back.

“As servants who serve Sacred Goddess-sama, we cannot accept such a declaration. Obvious though it may be, there appear to be no objections.”

The aged Pope rose from his seat, and made his declaration as he overlooked the gathering of leaders.

“Then, Your Eminence...”

“Declare our rejection of the announcement under my name. Further, call for the agreement of the other nations.”

“As you wish.”

The Cardinal of the Papal Board accepted the edict from the Pope, and so ended the meeting.



“What is Fortera thinking!?”

Hearing Fortera’s reaction to the Pope’s earlier proclamation, an urgent, special meeting was called.

To begin with, this kind of meeting was supposed to only be held at a certain time, once per year, and calling for a second meeting in such little time was extremely unusual.

However, considering the circumstances, it could be said that calling a meeting was natural.

Not only had the Kingdom of Fortera had rejected the Theocracy’s appeal and declared neutrality towards the Evil God Nation’s declaration, but brought attention to the dishonesty of the Church’s upper echelons—in other words, the people in this room, and furthermore showed their hostility by declaring the formation of a new sect.

It was not the case that nobody had ever opposed the headquarters of the Church, Luxiria, but an entire nation taking a position of hostility had never been seen before in history.

Of course, were this simply a rejection of the Church of Sacred Light, then they would have antagonised the other nations who had the Church as their state faith, and ostracised themselves.

However, they rejected not the Church of Sacred Light itself, but complained about the corruption of the current leaders, and formed a new sect based around devotions to the teachings—the Origin Faction.

Such an action was far more dangerous to the people in this room than simple opposition.

“The Origin Faction...? Rejecting our dogma? What nonsense.”

“It is likely mostly out of revenge for our earlier deployment of the Order.”

The Cardinal of the Magisterium openly frowned at the report. The report was the same as disgracing the Magisterium, so it was understandable.

The Cardinal of the Eparchia seemed unhappy as well, but that was due to another reason.

“And so, what was the impact on the other nations?”

“We tried to suppress the news, but it spread quite far. Too openly suppressing it would be liable to have the opposite effect, so we cannot help but act cautiously.”

“I suppose that cannot be helped either... EEI! So irritating!”

What the members of the Eparchia were agonising over was the information control of the announcement by the Kingdom of Fortera regarding the dishonesty of the higher-ups of the Church. From rampant bribery and abuse of power, to even the forgery of dogma – the many years of dishonesty were all made public at once, and the Eparchia were completely busy with suppressing the distrust from the believers.

Of course, had this all been unfounded rumours, doing so would not have been so difficult. However, given that it was tacitly understood amongst the other countries that this was at least half-true, controlling the information was not an easy task.

The Luxiria Theocracy with its small population and land held an advantage over the other nations due to having the absolute authority of being the home to the headquarters of the Church of Sacred Light. Putting things another way, with this advantage becoming unstable, they were liable to lose their superiority in an instant.

“For now, I suppose there is nothing we can do but urge the other nations not to join the faction created by Fortera.”

“Indeed. Let us have the churches in the other nations manoeuvre. Directly dealing with the Kingdom of Fortera will need to be postponed, but I do not think it can be helped. If the sect spreads, it will become unmanageable, after all.”

Authority gives rise to rights, and rights give rise to authorities. With the old roots they have formed in various countries, manoeuvring with their connections should prove to be quite effective.

Of course, Fortera understands this as well, and will likely move to suppress it. I suspect that a fierce power struggle will begin behind the scenes.

However, when it comes to the number of personnel they can mobilise, I cannot help but say that the Theocracy has the

advantage.

As long as there is no major incident to overturn this situation, it will be difficult for the Kingdom of Fortera to gain the advantage.

It is because they understand this, that the people gathered here were unhappy, but relatively calm.



“It-, It cannot be... Why would Sacred Goddess-sama...?”

One day, a little while after the previous meeting, the situation suddenly changed.

An unprecedented situation where Sacred Goddess Sophia made a revelation to all of the Human Race, and in merely one night, the situation in all the nations took a complete change.

The contents of the revelation included the existence of the Dark God, previously unknown to the Human Race; the “Evil God”, who was different to the one known by the Human Race; and the fact that the Human Race needed to conquer a dungeon in order for her to win the 3-way power struggle between the gods.

Had the revelation been received only by a small minority then it may have been tidied away as lies, but now that the entire Human Race had received the revelation, nobody in this room had the power to make them believe it was false.

And at the same time, this also spelt a major dilemma for the Luxiria Theocracy.

By the hand of none other than the one they worshipped, the Sacred Goddess, although it was only a part, their dogma was denied. What’s more, the part that was denied coincided with Fortera’s claims.

If one part of Fortera’s claims were confirmed, then it would naturally make people suspect that the rest of the claims were true as well. The rest of the claims... in other words, the claims regarding the corruption of the upper echelons of the Church of Sacred Light. It’s very likely that all of the Sacred Goddess’s followers believe that Fortera’s claims were correct.

“This is bad. At this rate...”

“We must urgently come up with some countermeasure.”

“But even if you say that, what are we to do. In this situation, taking a firm measure against Fortera would likely backfire on us. Manoeuvring against the problem country has been forbidden as well.”

“That...”

Hearing the Cardinal of the Papal Board say that, the others in the room fell silent as well. Just as he said, making some declaration about mobilising the Order of Sacred Light would instead heighten suspicion towards them.

Even the option of diverting dissatisfaction towards the “Evil God Nation” had been prohibited by none other than the Sacred Goddess herself.

“It cannot be helped. It seems that we have no choice but to admit to our mistakes in the dogma in regards to the Forteran claims about the Evil God.”

While the room was wrapped in silence, a voice called out from behind the members of the Papal Board.

“But, Your Eminence...”

“Now that Sacred Goddess-sama has affirmed Fortera’s claims, we cannot firmly object. Of course, we will deny the other claims, and must endeavour to abate the damage even a little.”

It was this moment that the Church of Sacred Light, that had thus far ruled humanity from the background, was forced to compromise, as well as the moment that they acknowledged a small, but substantial defeat.

I am sure that the Kingdom of Fortera will not let this chance go, and will use this critical moment to persecute them.

The winter had come for the Luxiria Theocracy, that had held its influence for a long, long time.



“And that concludes the report.”

“Well done. Hu hu hu, the Sacred Goddess’ revelation has given us an advantage. While they are embroiled in their factional disputes, let us plan the strengthening of our nation, for it is the will of Anri-sama.”

“By your will.”

“Now then, the coming days shall be busy. We must not let up on our missionary work either. And the construction of *that* must go ahead.”

Chapter 2 – A Certain Scripture's Pandemic

“So this is the problem book.”

In a room in a certain country, a number of people gazed down upon a book with black bindings that lay atop a desk.

“Yes, Your Majesty. You must take care never to touch it with your hands.”

“I know.”

The one referred to as Your Majesty was the king of that nation, and the people gathered in the room were also important leaders within the country.

Just the fact that so many people were gathered in this room was in and of itself a sign of the extraordinary circumstances behind it.

“The Black Scripture, huh. It seems that they've spread quite the troublesome thing.”

Their gazes were focused on the book called the Black Scripture. Although, the term ‘Black Scripture’ did not refer to only the book in front of them.

“Just the ones we have been able to identify alone indicate that over a hundred of them have been brought into the country. If we include those unaccounted for, it is likely that they number a few hundred...”

The one who gave the report was the skilled man who was supervisor to the Court Mages of this nation, as well as the Chief of Magical Research.

As he spoke, he turned the cover of the Black Scripture.

“O-, Oi!? Are you fine with touching that!?”

The leaders in the room panicked at the Chief's actions, but the Chief replied in a resigned voice,

“I have already touched it once, so...”

Now that he had mentioned it, they noticed that for a while now, the Chief had been limping as if to protect his right foot. And now that they had realised this, they all looked at him in pity.

“Please look at this.”

Behind the flipped cover were the warnings of the book.

According to the warnings, the book was a cursed item, and misfortune would befall those who had received this book. If they desired to avoid the misfortune, it was required that they transcribe the contents of the book, and hand it to another person, and unless they did so the misfortune would continue eternally. Furthermore, the curse would manifest in the transcribed copy as well.

The Black Scripture... A book written by the Evil God that was truly most wicked and foul. At that very moment it was making its terror known in countries where it had been propagated further.

“In order to avoid the misfortune, one must transcribe the book, huh. Then it is natural that it has spread this far.”

“Yes.”

Naturally, in order to avoid the misfortune, those who had accepted the book would transcribe a copy and try to push it onto others. To not do so was the same as being tormented by the misfortune for eternity, and was not something anybody would accept. Even if they prohibited this, it would merely lead to a revolt.

“Is it impossible to dispel the curse?”

“It was impossible even for the Archbishops of the Church of Sacred Light. The curse that it contains is far too powerful.”

Having said that though, in contrast to the fiendishness of its propagation mechanism, the misfortunes were light enough to be called an anti-climax, and this gap had caused the researchers much puzzlement. The misfortune that a receiver suffered was randomised, and although the misfortunes differed, none of them were beyond the level of simple harassment. Even the limp on the chief was due to the curse of continually stubbing the little toe of his foot against shelves, and was not a particularly grave injury.

However, it was also difficult to say that this was something that a person could ignore.

Even the Chief had originally not planned to spread the harm to anyone else, but after stubbing his toe three times, he yielded, and pushed a copy onto the Vice-Chief. Because of that, at present, the Vice-Chief's loyalty towards the Chief had dropped considerably.

"Can it not be stopped?"

"That would likely be difficult. However, there is a way to guide the damage in a more preferable direction."

"It cannot be helped. At this rate, there is no option but to reduce the harm within our own country."

It was difficult to stop the book from being pushed onto somebody else. However, it was not impossible to determine who the book was pushed onto. If they guided the harm outside the nation, the country would be saved for now, even without solving the root problem.

"It is likely that this will worsen relations with the neighbouring countries, but..."

"Of course, we will not disclose such a thing publicly. Hand them over to merchants leaving the country and the like, and have them independently carry them outside our borders."

"I see. Then it will also be necessary to prevent them being taken into our borders from other nations."

"Indeed. Prepare the arrangements urgently."

"Yes, Your Majesty. Understood."

With the King's order, the leaders all began to act.

With this, the damage to the nation could probably be abated.

Of course, the countries that had the books forced upon them would in turn force them on another, and so each nation would suffer the harm one by one. The result was that the nation unfortunate enough to suffer it last would have nowhere to force it onto, and would be forced to push it around within its own borders.

“Considering the state of the other countries, it’s clear who the final nation will be, huh.”

“Your Majesty? Did you say something?”

“Haha, I was simply thinking that it may be time to reconsider our association with the Theocracy.”

Considering the flow from the country that produced this, the closer one was the earlier one would suffer, and the further away one was, the later it would come. In that case, it was not difficult to imagine that the nation with the greatest antagonism with the country of origin would be the eventual target of this curse.

As for which nation in particular, that much was already common knowledge.



While around the world, the Black Scripture was being treated as an object of fear, there was one country alone that instead saw it with affection.

The Holy Anri Thearchy; a newly established nation formed by a gathering of those who worshipped Evil God Anri. At present it was only a small nation that would be better called a town, but with each passing day, its influence grew.

To the Thearchy, the Black Scripture said to be written by Evil God Anri was truly a “scripture”. Every person in the country had a copy, and it was a virtue to proactively transcribe them and proselytise in other countries. Of course, because the normal citizens of the Thearchy had no export route, the copies would be gathered together in the Thearchy, and sent beyond the borders all at once.

Additionally, although the people of the Thearchy also suffered the curse at first, it was thought of as a trial from God.

And in this Thearchy, two buildings linked to the Temple had been newly established.

The first was the Orphanage; an institution for sheltering children who had lost their parents. Other nations had their own measures

for orphans as well, but they were undeniably lacking, and so children with no place to go appeared no matter the nation. Gathering such children within the Orphanage, providing them enough food and a warm bed, and finally thoroughly educating them was the role of this institution.

Together with things like writing and arithmetic, the children gathered in the Orphanage were also taught from a young age the splendour of the deity worshipped by the Thearchy, Evil God Anri (although she was not recognised as “Evil” God within the Thearchy).

With strong piety towards Evil God Anri, as well as a vigorous education, they were also possible future elites for the Thearchy.

The other institution was a building created for the sake of transcribing the Black Scripture. The desks, chairs, paper, and pens required for transcription were lined up neatly inside the building, and at the back were people on standby who turned the pages into books.

This building was also the gathering place for transcribed scriptures, and gathered not only copies from within the institute, but copies from all across the country.

The books stored in the Transcription Hall were gathered and counted, and each month the number of copies was announced on a board.

The one who splendidly managed first place would be publicly commended by the Pope himself, but up until now that had never happened even once. The reason was simple – first place was being monopolised by a certain man.

“Hmm, I’m in good shape today, aren’t I.”

Unwilling to hand over the position of first place was none other than the Pope himself. As long as the position of first was being taken by him, nobody else would be commended. Even at this very moment he was sitting in first place, and transcribing copies in the Transcription Hall, but shockingly, this man was transcribing a different copy with each hand.

Normally the transcription process would be carried out while silently reading the original on the side, but when it came to this man, he had already memorised every word of the Black Scripture, and wrote

from memory. In order to fulfil the act of 'transcribing', he did in fact have a copy there, but he was not looking inside.

Even ignoring the fact that he had learnt the contents by heart, he was writing with both hands at the same time. Such a feat could be called nothing but skilled, but as a result, he boasted a transcription speed of over twice the average person's.

As long as there was nobody else who could replicate this feat, the seat of first place would stay with him alone.

Although there was the concern of who was governing the nation if he was doing nothing but transcribing, but it was because he was properly fulfilling those duties as well that made this so difficult to comment on.

"Pope-samaa, I finishedd one~"

"Me tooo~"

"Me tooo~"

"My, how splendid. Anri-sama is surely delighted."

Boys and girls were sitting by the Pope and transcribing as well, proudly announcing their achievements to him.

With this heartwarming scene before him, the Pope gave a gentle smile and praised the children.

"Yayyy~"

"I'll go write one moree~"

"I might get first place!"

"Huhu, try your best."

In addition, separate to the adult rankings was a children's ranking that was properly functioning. Centred around the children of the Orphanage, they transcribed as a part of their upbringing. It was a ground-breaking arrangement that had them learn the teachings of the scriptures, while practising their reading and writing as well.

The contents of the scriptures were morals regarding how to live properly as a person, so it was nothing unsuitable for a child's upbringing.

The amount of sweets given out were dependent on the rankings, so all the children assertively competed in transcribing of their own accord.

“Huhuhu, building the Transcription Hall was truly the right answer. With this, the proselytising will surely advance even further.”



In addition, had all the nations worked together and used death row prisoners as sacrifices, they might have been able to solve the issue surprisingly simply.

Chapter 3 – A Certain Owner and Pet's Walk

Monster—a term used to refer to living beings that possess above a certain amount of mana.

However, strictly speaking, this definition was not accurate. The first reason was that humans and demons possessed mana but were not included as monsters. The second is that golems, undead, and other non-living creatures were generally included as monsters as well.

All feared beings that cause harm to humans and demons were being labelled as “monsters” – this was probably the best way to describe the situation.

However, even if they were feared beings that cause harm, although a few monsters did pose a threat by appearing near towns or villages, average people were generally unrelated to the majority of them.

Golems and undead only appeared in specific locations like dungeons or ruins, and the other particularly powerful monsters tended to live in locations far from civilisation, rarely leaving. Of course, it wasn't the case that these monsters were avoiding settlements, but rather that settlements were built in places far from the territories of these monsters.

With the exception of some adventurers, the beings that come to mind upon hearing the term “monster” were goblins, kobolds, or an orc at best, and from the point of view of normal people who lived their whole lives in town, even these monsters were rarely seen, and only heard of.

To such people, particularly powerful monsters were creatures that existed solely in folktales, legends, and fairy tales.

Of course, these people understood as well that such creatures did exist in the world.

However, these creatures would almost never appear in the personal “worlds” that they each lived in, and were as good as non-existent.

Because of this...

“I-, I-, IT-, IT'S A DRAGONNNNNNNN!?”

“RUN! RUUUUUUUUUUN!!”

“NOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOO!!”

if a dragon were to appear in the skies above them, it was natural that panic would ensue.



It all began earlier that morning.

After breakfast time, Light God Sophia witnessed a strange spectacle during her continued stay at the Evil God Temple.

It was the figure of the Evil God Anri making food. Well, that much was fine.

Tena had left with the human Anri, so seeing the Evil God preparing food was not so strange in itself. To begin with, it wasn't that she couldn't cook due to a lack of technical skills, but rather that she couldn't hold a kitchen knife due to the curse. Now that she had overcome the curse, there was nothing to stop her from cooking.

Being “able to cook” and “able to cook well” are entirely different matters, but for the sake of her honour, let us speak no further on the matter.

Having established this, what was strange was not the cooking in itself, but the food that Anri was cooking—apparently sandwiches—and the fact that she then put them into a basket.

To begin with, they had already eaten breakfast, so what she was cooking was for lunch. Cooking food for lunch despite only having finished breakfast, and then placing the food into a basket.

The only thing imaginable was...

“Umm... Anri? Preparing your food like that, are you intending on going someplace?”

So asked Sophia, whilst believing it was impossible.

It couldn't be helped that she found it unbelievable. After all, as far as Sophia knew, the black-haired, expressionless newcomer god in front of her was somebody who never went outside even once a year. A complete hikikomori.

With such a person doing something that could only be seen as preparation for going outside, the abnormality of the situation needn't even be said.

"Mn, I'm going to go out a bit. I'll be back before evening. I've made you sandwiches for lunch, so eat them later."

Hearing that, she followed Anri's gaze and found other sandwiches sitting on a plate. They numbered about two people's worth. Probably made for both Sophia and Anbaal.

It was the case with Anri as well, but both Sophia and Anbaal were divines and thus relied on faith instead of food for sustenance.

To the two of them, eating food was nothing more than enjoyment, but needless to mention Anri who had naturally grown used to a human's habits, even Sophia and Anbaal almost always ate three meals a day while they were staying in the Temple.

"Well thank you for that, but just where are you going?"

"I haven't decided yet. Just going for a walk, after all."

"I see."

Anri replied that she was just going out without any goal in mind, but since it was healthier to go on a walk than to continue holing up in the temple, Sophia showed her agreement too.

As an Evil God that threw all creatures in the land into an abyss of fear, there was probably no greater nuisance than wandering about on a whim, but Sophia believed that Anri was used to her eyes and aura by now, and would probably make do somehow.

That this was an incredibly naive thought was something that she only realised after hearing Anri's next line. And by then, it was too late.

"Well, I'm off now. Time for Vnee's walk."

"...Hah? W-, Wait, stop right there!?"

Sophia froze due to the unexpected words, and faster than she could recover and call out to stop, Anri had touched the sandwich basket as well as another basket many times larger, before

teleporting away.

“By ‘walk’... she meant Black Dragon Vardneel... instead?”

Sophia’s mutter resounded through the empty room.

“...She plans on letting that Black Dragon out?”

Still in a daze, Sophia continued to mutter, but nobody was there to reply.

And like that, due to the Human Race’s supposed guardian deity missing the chance to stop the tragedy, the world’s most powerful and wicked pet was released into the open.



A massive body of over 20 metres danced through the air as though splitting the clear blue sky in two.

The beats of its wings were powerful, and the explosive propulsive force gave rise to incredible speeds.

Although it was still fine due to the fact that he was high up in the end, had he been flying close to the surface, the wind pressure alone would probably have blown everything away.

Black Dragon Vardneel.

The most wicked dragon, said to bring calamity to the world, was enjoying the skies for the first time in a while.

Even since he had been summoned as a boss for the dungeon, he hadn’t been allowed outside even once, and basically spent his time imprisoned in the small, cramped room. That probably made his sense of liberation even greater.

“GUOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOHHHH!!!”

The roar that he let out in his joy sounded like a joyful song of freedom.

However, as for whether or not he was truly free, of course the answer was that he wasn’t.

The master that he feared the most in the world was present on his

back, so it was actually a far cry from freedom.

When he had first been summoned he had cowered at her aura, and because of the terror he lay belly up in submission, but after, he grew closer day by day due to the training, and by now he had stopped running up the wall when he saw her.

Even so, if you had to ask if his fear had completely disappeared, then the answer would be no.

The instinctual terror that he felt due to his master's aura was not so simply removed.

Although he was not particularly intelligent, he knew by instinct just how dangerous it would be to anger the master on his back.

Because of that, although he was rejoicing his freedom, he was careful to fly so that the feeling of riding his back was comfortable.

But despite his consideration due to fear, to put it simply, it was completely useless.

“S-, So cold...”

The black-robed girl on his back shivered while desperately clinging to his back.

No matter how careful he was being to avoid accidentally shaking her, given the altitude and speed, the feeling of riding his back was already as bad as it could get.

And naturally so, because while the high altitude alone meant that the temperature was quite low, on top of that, she was being exposed to the intense wind pressure from his flying speed.

As divines had high stamina she was able to bear it, but had she been a human it wouldn't have been strange for her to have frozen to death.

In addition, unlike a horse's back, the wide back of the dragon made it impossible to straddle, so she could do nothing but cling to the scales and the moment her hand slipped, she would be falling headfirst to the ground.

“I-, I should have just called this off...”

Even if she regretted the walk now, it was much too late.

She had envisioned a pleasant trip through the sky, but the reality was harsh. The path to become a dragon rider was severe.

Also, although she had enough power to easily solve the cold and wind issues, sadly, Anri was still inexperienced as a divine, and the idea of using an Authority in this situation hadn't quite occurred to her.

"Let's hurry up and find a plain somewhere to land on."

The plan was to find a wide plain somewhere and treat herself to lunch.

She had prepared her own portion of sandwiches, and she had the Black Dragon's lunch in the larger basket as well... Although she actually held neither of them, and stored them in her item box though.

However, at present she hadn't even the slightest care about lunch, and just wanting to land somewhere was all she could think of.

As a result, no matter what kind of uproar was happening below her, she hadn't the composure to notice.

And right this very moment, the fact that the people of a town were in a huge panic due to a dragon sighting, was something she had no way of knowing.

"Ah..."

With the wind blowing in her eyes it was hard to see, but the moment that she saw a wide plain in her limit vision, Anri thanked God for the help. Despite the fact that she was a divine herself.

Tapping on the back of the Black Dragon she was clinging to, she gave him instructions on where to land.

"Over there. Land over there."

"Guru?"

The Black Dragon with low intelligence naturally couldn't understand her words, but even so, he seemed to understand Anri's intention, and after turning towards the grass plains, he lowered his altitude and speed to begin landing.

Now that they were heading towards the ground and the wind and cold were receding, Anri let out a relieved sigh.

That she would have to suffer the same ordeal to get home was

something she only realised after finishing up her sandwiches.

And taking the chance to mention it, the fact that more suffering was waiting for her in the form of Sophia's lecturing, was something she hadn't expected at the time.

Chapter 4 – A Certain Group of Heroes' Manual Labour

On the second floor of the Evil God Temple, a group of six men and women were gathered before a certain room.

The group comprised three men, and three women, and was in a sense the group that was least fitting to be here.

“Umm, is this the place?”

“Yes. In accordance to Sacred Goddess-sama’s esteemed words, I believe there is no mistake.”

“But still, this place, ey? Why’d Sacred Goddess-sama tell us to come to a place like the Evil God Temple, anyways?”

“Beats me. Having said that though, if it’s to get Arc’s Holy Sword back, of course we had to go.”

“I need my Holy Spear back too, after all.”

“I as well. Without my Holy Bow in hand, I really can’t be said to be fit for the title Hero.”

They were Hero of the Holy Sword, Arc’s party; Hero of the Holy Spear, Lionel; and Hero of the Holy Bow, Orlaine; a total of six members. However, ever since they failed to capture the “Holy Land of the Evil God” and had their weapons stolen from them, their titles now felt a little ironic.

Holy Weapons that served as both the symbols of the Heroes and the source of their powers—weapons blessed by Light God Sophia that chose their owners. Instead of wielders choosing their weapons, it was the weapons themselves that chose and acknowledged the wielders as their owners.

And those acknowledged by these weapons became existences chosen by Light God Sophia, and gained the title of Hero. Arc, Lionel and Orlaine as well had become Heroes in this way.

Because of that, they were Heroes only because of their Holy

Weapons, and therefore it was *because* they were heroes that they ought to be holding their Holy Weapons. Just as Orlaine had said, having their weapons stolen was a fatal defeat for a Hero, and even if they were verbally abused, there was nothing they could say in return.

“It won’t return even when I call for it... Just what on earth has happened to my Holy Bow?”

“Yeah, usually when we call for them they immediately come back, ey?”

In reply to Orlaine’s anxious words, the blue haired Lionel agreed. The Holy Weapons were the ones who chose the owners, and on top of absolutely nobody else being capable of using them, even if they weren’t in hand, they would immediately fly towards the owner once called for.

Knowing this, when the Heroes had failed the dungeon and woken up without them, they had tried calling for the weapons countless times. However, the Holy Weapons would not return.

When it came to Orlaine, until Arc and the others had stopped her, she called for the Holy Bow again and again until her light purple hair was a mess and her eyes were filled with tears, but there wasn’t any effect.

“I’m sure it’ll be fine. Sacred Goddess-sama told me that I would be able to recover my Holy Sword if I came here. In that case, the Holy Sword should be safe.”

“It would be good if that was true...”

The blonde haired Arc tried to cheer her up, but Orlaine hung her head, perhaps still worried. To begin with, as a frail girl chosen by the Holy Bow to be a Hero, she had strained herself to fulfil her duties. She was probably emotionally unstable due to the shock of losing the crucial Holy Bow.

“It’s fine. I haven’t broken the Holy Sword, the Holy Spear, or the Holy Bow either.”

While the Heroes were talking, a voice called out from behind them.

Thinking that they hadn't noticed somebody enter the room because they were too focused on themselves, the party turned around in surprise.

And standing there was a black-haired girl clad in a jet black dress decorated with rose designs.

The moment they saw the girl's black eyes, a shudder ran through them all.

The blood dramatically left them, and they had goosebumps all over their bodies. Their throats felt parched, and their teeth chattered. Around the time their limbs began to tremble of their own accord, their whole bodies started letting out a cold sweat, as though finally remembering to do so.

It was impossible to beat this girl... Even if they had their Holy Weapons, it was impossible to beat this girl.

Up until that moment, the strongest foe they had ever met was the one currently on standby deep below on the 30th floor, but from this girl standing in front of them they could feel a power even greater than the despair-inducing Imperial Death.

Their instincts, emotions and intellect... the fear experienced by all of these seemed to crush for an instant the pure and strong hearts of these Heroes. But this was certainly not because they were weak of spirit. Had they been so, they would have immediately escaped the moment they met her eyes. The very fact that they still remained there was a testament to their strength.

And how they responded was by dropping on the spot, getting on their hands and knees, and pressing their head against the floor. It was the pose of ultimate apology, passed down in the legends of the Heroes—the dogeza.

“...Ah-, sorry.”

Because the people around her had gotten used to averting their own eyes, the girl had half-forgotten about her own mystic eyes and she reflexively muttered an apology in front of the resulting dogeza festival.



The girl——Anri, told them to get up while avoiding her eyes, as well as the gist of her mystic eyes. It was only a while after her first appearance that they were able to have a conversation.

There was a small upset when Anri named herself as a relative of the Evil God, but after showing her adventurer card and having them confirm that she was a human, they didn't ask anything more.

Normally a relative of the Evil God wasn't something that the Heroes could overlook, but because she was somebody they met at the place that the Light God had told them to visit, the fact that they couldn't do anything careless was one of the reasons they didn't inquire further.

The second reason was that there was something even more important to them in her earlier words.

“Then, you have the Holy Sword right now!?”

“The Holy Spear too?”

“And the Holy Bow!?”

Hearing Anri mention the locations of the Holy Weapons, the Heroes reflexively let out cries of surprise.

“Please, return them to us!”

Arc held Anri's hand in his two, and desperately appealed to her. Normally in a situation like this the two would be looking at each other in the eyes, but because they were making sure not to do so, it looked terrible comical from the side.

The one who had been most shaken due to the loss of their Holy Weapon was Orlaine, but inside, it was Arc that was most anxious. And a big part of that was because unlike Orlaine and Lionel who did their work solo, Arc worked in a party. In the end, it was nothing more than a personal problem for Orlaine and Lionel, but to Arc it was causing inconvenience to his party members, so it couldn't be helped.

“I'm fine with giving them back, but there will be conditions.”

“Oi, oi, whaddya mean conditions?”

Zio showed his dissatisfaction towards Anri’s words.

From his point of view, the mission of the Heroes was to protect the Human Race, so just the thought of being uncooperative was unthinkable, but that had nothing to do with Anri.

“...Please tell me them. If there’s anything I can do, I will!”

“...I will too!”

“Can’t be helped. Pisses me off, but just say it.”

The Heroes resolved themselves with tragic expressions, and Anri simply informed them of the condition.

“Help me build my house.”

“Hah?”

The six of them were wondering if they had heard wrong, but Anri’s reply didn’t change.

After asking for the third time, the Heroes finally understood that she was serious, and Anri gave them a simple explanation of the situation.

In order for Anri to move out of the temple that she was living in, she needed her house to be built, so in return for the Holy Weapons that she received from the Evil God, she wanted them to help her with the construction.

“So uh, basically construction work? Soz, but I’ve never done that before. Don’t think I’ll be much help, yanno?”

“I have professionals hired as well. Just helping with the heavy lifting and other simple work is enough.”

Lionel voiced his doubts, but Anri expected such a question, and replied with a nod.

“Heroes as labourers, huh...”

“The image is a little...”

“No, that doesn’t matter! It’s not like we’re doing anything bad, so if

that's all we have to do it's still cheap."

Frey and Widdi showed their disapproval, but Arc replied as though shaking off the thought. He had been deeply anxious about what kind of job the Evil God's relative would demand from him, so the construction work was quite the anticlimax.

To a person like him who wanted to help those who needed it, he felt like it was something he would be fine with helping with even without the deal with the Holy Sword.

"Well, can't be helped, ey? If it's just manual labour, I think I can do it too, after all."

"Eh? Wait, Zio. It's to get back my Holy Sword, so it's enough that only I work, right?"

"What are you being so distant for. Either way, we aren't gunna be working until you get the Holy Sword back, so it'd be better to get it back quickly, right?"

"Well, it's like Zio says. Widdi and I wouldn't be too useful for manual labour, but there should be other stuff we can help out with. Right, Widdi?"

"Of course. We'll help out as well! We won't let you work alone, Arc-sama."

"Everyone..."

Seeing Arc's party reaffirm their bonds, Orlaine and Lionel looked a little envious as they looked on.

Also, because of the sudden addition to her workers, Anri was mentally pumping her fist in victory.

"Well, that's how it is. I'm fine with it."

"I am as well. Even if I look like this, I do work out, so I can do physical work as well!"

Both Lionel and Orlaine agreed, and the six of them agreed to help Anri build her house.

"Thanks. The personnel involved in building the house are gathered in

that room over there, so just follow their instructions. The planning stage should be just about finished.”

“Yeah, got it.”

At this point, they all realised why they had been sent here. After watching Anri leave, the six of them fired themselves up, and opened the door before them.

And then closed it.

“Oi, what the hell was that battlefield!?”

Zio let out anxious words after catching a glimpse of what was beyond the door.

Indeed; it was a battlefield.

A number of people were gathered around a model mansion in the middle of the room, and vehemently arguing, while a mountain of discarded blueprints lay to the side.

When they saw the workers frantically run about as angry roars flew about the room, for some reason the six of them saw themselves overlapped with it, and chills ran down their spines.

And that image became a reality.

The door that they had closed on reflex was opened with a bang, and from inside the room came a blonde young man in a luxurious priests’ gown.

“You must be the workers that Anri-sama spoke of! Huhuhu, we have been waiting for you!”

The blonde man had handsome looks, but the dark bags under his eyes put it to waste. Probably on a high from pulling multiple all-nighters fuelled on enthusiasm alone, the man continued to talk happily as the dumbfounded six looked on.

“We were just starting to run short of workers! Quickly, quickly! Please come inside!”

With those words, the young man—Pope Harvin, took their rears at a speed invisible even to the veteran Heroes, and began pushing the six of them into the room.

“Hey-, hang on!?”

“S-, Stop it!”

“Hii!?”

“T-, This isn’t a joke, you know!?”

“N-, No way, oi...”

“NOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOO!?”

Having finally understood that it was no simple construction work, the six of them tried to escape in a panic, but the Pope paid no heed to the pitiful sacrifices, and forcefully pushed them in the room before closing the door.

Also, while Anri had no idea, the plans had at some point upgraded from “house” to “palace” and although the time the six of them needed to work had risen in proportion, it was already too late.

Chapter 5 – A Certain Servant's Return Home

“You want to go back to your old village?”

It was a little while after they had settled down in the Black Rose Mansion that Tena had told Anri as such.

“Yes. I had always been hesitant about it, but in the end I really do want to meet with my family once.”

When she had first begun living with Anri, they had discussed this matter as well, but at the time she hadn't been able to settle her feelings yet, and they postponed the visit. It was natural that she held complex feelings about being sold as a slave, but with time, she was able to sort them out.

And being the case, Anri had only one possible reply.

“Got it. I'll be fine here, so don't worry and go.”

There were plenty of things that she'd be troubled with if Tena wasn't here to do the housework, but if it was just for a short while, then she would manage somehow, which is why Anri easily gave her consent. After all, it wasn't as though Anri herself couldn't do housework, and Leonora was here too. Even the young Lili had recently begun to help out around the house, so Anri judged there was no problem.

And so, Anri tried to send Tena off, but Tena herself gave an unexpected reply.

“Umm... If possible, I would like to introduce you to my family, Anri-sama, but is that no good?”

“.....Eh?”

Had anyone else been in the room, they would very probably have tried to stop this, but for better or for worse, it was only the two of them in the room.



It was a small village, a few days' carriage from Riemel Town. Almost nobody visited the village, save the occasional merchants, or a pastor from the Church of Sacred Light, and in this village arrived a single luxurious horse-carriage.

Before the eyes of the villagers staring in curiosity, opened the door of the carriage, and from there alighted two girls.

The moment the villagers saw the face of one of the girls, they immediately formed a ring around her at a distance.

The reason was simple; an angular black mask covered her eyes. Together with her entirely black dress with its bewitching design, there was nothing that could be more suspicious, and it couldn't be helped that the villagers were wary.

Because of how much impact the girl had, the gazes of the villagers completely ignored the girl who they normally would have been concentrating on.

"Umm..."

"? ...Tena? Aren't you Tena!?"

Tena timidly raised her voice, and finally noticing her, the villagers let out cries of surprise.

It was a small village to begin with, and everybody knew each other. All of them remembered the girl who had been sold as a slave. Once one of them noticed her, villagers tried to draw near her, one after another.

But overwhelmed by the strange girl standing next to her, they couldn't come near and instead stood around a little distance away.

"So you were fine, Tena..."

"Yes, Roi-san."

A man in the prime of his life called out to Tena, and with that as the impetus, all the other villagers began calling out to her as well.

"Thank goodness. Everybody was so worried for you."

“Muer-obaasan...”

An old lady with a cane spoke to Tena in tears, and Tena’s eyes became watery as well.

“Tena-oneechan!”

“I’m sorry, Epina.”

A girl around Lili’s age ran up to Tena, hugging her, and Tena stroked her head with a gentle smile.

“.....”

“.....”

And then, silence fell.

All of the villagers were in joy at their reunion with Tena, but because the girl next to her was on their minds, they couldn’t concentrate.

All of them wanted to push the task onto somebody else, and nobody could say the words, but finally the man from before—Roi, timidly asked,

“By the way, who is that person?”

Once again, all the gazes fell onto the girl, but she simply stood there calmly, showing no signs of being overwhelmed.

“Ah, this personage is my master, Anri-sama.”

A commotion ran through the villagers.

After looking back and forth between the faces of the masked Anri, and Tena, complicated expressions appeared on their faces.

The villagers knew that Tena had been sold as a slave.

Being a beauty, even despite her age, had her master been a man, his intention would have been clear, and the villagers would likely have turned their hostility on him.

On this point, the master in question was a young-looking woman, and Tena seemed to be fond of her as well. Tena was somebody close to them, and she couldn’t have been sold to a better person. Normally, the villagers should have welcomed this.

However...

—What on earth was that mask!?

So wondered every single villager there.

Whether her age, or her sex, she seemed to be the safest and most fortunate master possible for Tena, but just that suspicious mask on her face weighed on their minds.

They wanted to ask why she was wearing such a mask. They wanted to ask, but once they considered that it might be disrespectful, in the end they couldn't bring it up.

To begin with, looking at the carriage she arrived in, and the dress that she was wearing, there was no mistaking that she was a powerful person with a considerable sum of assets. If they incurred her displeasure, it was possible that a small village like this would be very simply crushed... Having considered that, the villagers couldn't give voice to their question.

The truth was that the girl—Anri, was simply an adventurer in Fortera, to which this village belonged to, and leaving aside her substantial connections to the Holy Anri Thearchy, she actually had no official authority at all. However, the villagers had no way of knowing this.

In the end, the villagers didn't bring up Anri's mask, and the two of them headed towards Tena's house.

After parting from the villagers, Tena and Anri came to a stop in front of a house. Even now the villagers were worrying about them at a distance, but the two girls hadn't noticed.

The house was a cosy one built from wood, and it seemed as though quite some time had passed since its construction, because it was damaged here and there.

“This place?”

“Yes, this is my... this is the house that my family lives in.”

Tena couldn't bring herself to say 『my house』. Her brows were curved in a difficult expression.

She stood there in front of the door, and stared at the doorknob.

“Not going to go in?”

“...I’ll, be opening it now.”

Anri gently prompted her, and as though finding her courage, Tena tightly clenched her hand before reaching out to open the door.

However, before she could do so, a voice called out to her from the side.

“.....Tena?”

Standing there was a blonde woman in the latter half of her thirties, clad in simple clothes. Her expression seemed to say that she simply couldn’t believe it, and she stared at Tena.

“Mum!”

Tena had hesitated at opening the door, but it seemed that her desire to meet with her family was stronger after all. Tena ran in tears to the woman, and tightly embraced her.

Tena’s mother was dumbfounded for a while, but eventually realising that this was real, she wept and hugged Tena back.



Noticing voices in front of the door, the rest of the family went out to investigate as well, and after hugging each other in tears at the miraculous reunion, they invited Anri and Tena into the house.

Sitting at the table, Tena recounted her experiences thus far. About being sold to the slave merchants, and almost losing her life to a fatal disease, and upon hearing her treatment until she was sold to Anri as a slave, Tena’s family burst into tears.

“Tena... Tena, I’m sorry! I’m so sorry!”

Tena’s father lowered his head to the table and apologised, but Tena calmly shook her head.

“It’s fine, Dad. I know that if I wasn’t sold that day, I would have just starved to death anyway. And thanks to that, I was able to meet with Anri-sama and the others, so... it’s fine already.”

When Tena said so, her father tightly held her hands from across the

table, and holding his head against them, he cried.

After crying for a while, this time her father lowered his head to Anri.

“You saved Tena, didn’t you. Thank you very much! Thank you very much!”

“Thank you very much!”

“Thank you very much!”

“Thank you, Oneechan!”

Her father, her mother, her older brother and then younger brother all began thanking Anri in a bow.

Anri had been spaced out, and sipping tea while watching the family’s reunion without much involvement, but now that they all began focusing on her she fell into confusion and panic.

Raising her hands towards them, she spoke.

“It wasn’t really... anything special.”

Anri said that and tried to downplay herself, but the family’s looks of gratitude were unchanging.

While the back and forth between thanks and modesty continued for a while, eventually somebody asked a certain question.

“Hey, hey, why are you wearing a mask?”

“H-, Hey now!”

Because Tena’s little brother was still young, he innocently voiced the question that the villagers couldn’t.

His mother tried to stop him in a panic, but it was too late.

“Why, you ask? Well...”

There were two reasons that Anri was wearing a mask; the first was to prevent the effect of her mystic eyes from invoking, while the second was out of fear of the consequences of having the same face as a god.

However, if she was to explain these things, then it would require her to touch upon her skills, as well as her relationship with the Evil God.

Just a while ago when Tena recounted her experiences to her family, she introduced Anri as a daughter of a mage family who was presently conducting research in Riemel.

By now it was too difficult to explain the truth.

“Well...”

“Well?”

Anri cut her words short as though in teasing. In reality she was simply troubled on how to answer, but from an outsider’s point of view, it plainly looked like she was building up the suspense.

Everybody in the room waited on Anri’s words.

Even the mother that had tried to stop her son’s rudeness a while ago seemed to be curious as well, because like the rest of her family, she was watching Anri’s every action.

“Well...”

“Well?”

Because Anri was being so suggestive with her words, even Tena who supposedly knew the truth found herself leaning forward in anticipation.

With no way to take back her words, Anri declared the only reason she could come up with.

“Because it’s, cool?”

Hearing that reply after all the suspense, everyone besides the youngest boy fell over with astonishment.



“Are you sure? Wouldn’t it have been good if you stayed there longer?”

“No, it is fine. Staying there any longer would have made the farewell difficult, so...”

After saying farewell to Tena’s family who kept inviting them to stay

in their reluctance to part, Anri asked Tena that question.

“And also, right now my house... is the Black Rose Mansion.”

“...I see. Alright then.”

After those last words, a gentle silence filled the returning carriage.

“U-, Um! I also think that your mask is cool, Anri-sama!”

“...Mn. Thanks.”



Even though it was supposed to be a moving reunion scene, because everybody was focused on Masked Anri, they couldn't concentrate.

Chapter 6 – A Certain Demon King's Dinner Gathering

At present there were four girls living in the Black Rose Mansion. Anri who was the lord of the estate, Tena who was her kin as well as the head maid, Lili who was like a younger sister that helped with the housework despite her age, and finally Leonora who was a sponger. Among these four, Anri, Tena and Lili were permanent residents but in the end, Leonora was simply staying here temporarily.

As the daughter of the Demon King and the successor to his throne, once her moratorium journey was finished, she would be returning to the Demon Race Territory.

To begin with, there was no fixed date for the end of her journey, but she couldn't continue it forever.

She herself had placed the conditions for return as "obtaining some kind of merit".

And objectively speaking, she had already accomplished this.

She had helped with the establishment of a neighbouring nation, and had deep bonds with its VIPs. Additionally, this neighbouring nation shaved away land from the enemy nation, Fortera, and was constructed like a buffer. Furthermore, trade with the Human Race that had been previously deemed as impossible, was now possible through this new nation.

She had gained plenty enough merit as a successor to the throne.

As a result, it could be said that the message she had received was natural.

"You're returning to your country?"

"Yeah, they're starting to press me, you see."

At dinner, Leonora told Anri and the others about her motherland's inquiries about whether she was ready to return.

"It's pretty sudden."

“No, that’s not really true. They’ve implicitly brought it up before. I had decided to leave it alone until they straight out said it, but as you’d expect, I probably can’t stay here much longer this time.”

“I see...”

Because it was akin to Leonora admitting herself that she still wanted to stay here, she flushed a little red with embarrassment.

“So when will you be leaving, Leonora-san?”

“Let’s see. I’m planning on departing tomorrow.”

“T-, Tomorrow, you say?”

“Yeah. We’re pretty far from the Demon Race Territory after all.”

Leonora’s reply had shocked Tena. Certainly, this did seem quite sudden. But as Leonora had said, it would take a number of days to the Demon Race Territory. On top of that, it would take even more days from the border to the Demon King Castle. Because of that, it made sense that she needed to depart as soon as possible.

“And so, there’s something I want to ask... Won’t you come with me to visit the Demon Race Territory?”

“? Us?”

“Yeah. I’m inviting you as a friend. Naturally, you’re VIPs in a neighbouring country, and will be entertained as state guests.”

At present, Anri had no official power in the Holy Anri Thearchy, but realistically considering her connections, it wasn’t necessarily wrong to call her a VIP.

But in that case, they should have sent a request through the Holy Anri Thearchy, and not directly invited her like this.

In the end, the truth was that Leonora was simply inviting a friend to her house.

Leonora Romariel... As the heir to the Demon King’s Throne, she had always been friendless.



The next day, Anri and Leonora visited the Evil God Temple. Leonora had planned on inviting Anri, Tena and Lili, but Lili was still too young, and the long journey would not be good for her. Because of that, Tena was forced to stay back to look after her, and in the end only Anri would be going.

“Hey, Anri... Are we seriously riding that thing?”

“It’s faster this way.”

“Well, sure, but... but, you know...”

The two of them were here at the Evil God Temple to secure their means of transport.

Going by foot or carriage like normal people would take almost a month there and back, but now that Tena and Lili would be waiting at the Black Rose Estate, Anri didn’t want to take so long.

And so, she had chosen the fastest method of getting there. And she could find that method here.

Still, when Leonora had heard, she frowned unhappily.

She had told them that she would be departing today, but she never mentioned how she would be getting there. After all, she only found out today.

When Anri told her that they would be getting there in a day, she carelessly thought it would be teleportation magic or the like. That optimism had backfired on her. Thinking about it carefully, the divine race Anri aside, there was no way that the human Anri could have such a power.

There weren’t any more appointed communications with her country, but it was still possible to send an emergency communiqué to let them know first. While Leonora was agonising over whether or not she should do it, it was already too late.

Having given up, Leonora sighed and muttered her faint hope.

“It’d be good if this didn’t cause an uproar at home, but...”



Demon Race Territory, Demon King's Castle

Deep within the Demon Race Territory lay a castle. It belonged to the Demon King who reigned supreme within the Demon Race, and served as their supreme headquarters.

Although the war between the demons and humans had continued for a long time, the battles all took place near the borders, and not once had a human invaded as far as the Demon King Castle.

Despite this, its security showed no signs of negligence.

Many layers of large security nets protected the castle, and if an enemy army was ever spotted, the demonic forces were ready to intercept them at a moment's notice.

One day, an urgent message arrived at the castle from one the 'net' closest to the Human Race Territory.

"Your Majesty! Urgent news!"

"How noisy. What is going on?"

Eligor Romariel, the incumbent Demon King, had been in his office when a guard suddenly stormed in.

"Just a moment ago, we received news from one of the border forts! According to the report, a gargantuan dragon is making a beeline towards this castle!"

"A dragon, you say?"

"Yes, Sire! An ominous, jet black dragon."

The report silenced the Demon King, who had seemingly fallen into silent recollection of something. But before he could organise his thoughts, a question from the guard scattered them.

"What shall we do, Sire?"

"If it is navigating the skies then our security nets will be of no use. Have the troops gather in the direction of the dragon! Also, have Renarve, Vikuto, and Ijido come as well. I shall also head there

immediately.”

Giving a passing glance at the guard who hurried away, the Demon King began preparing his equipment.

By the time the Demon King had appeared in the castle’s eastern quadrant, the guards had already finished preparing.

Troops with shields stood on the ground, and formed the vanguard to oppose the dragon’s aerial attacks, whilst the mage troops stood within the castle walls. The frontline troops were to serve as a decoy, and the mages were to concentrate their attacks while the dragon was distracted.

Although they had suddenly been gathered here, the soldiers showed no signs of panic, and calmly arranged themselves. Their actions reflected the preparedness and level of training of the Demon Race.

And the ones who directly commanded them were the Four Heavenly Kings who served as the Demon King’s close aides.

“Vanguard, how goes the preparation of your shields!”

“They are ready, Renarve-sama!”

“Mage Unit, I assume that all of you are here?”

“Yessir, everybody is present!”

Violent Gale Knight Renarve was commanding the frontline, whilst Bloodfrost General Vikuto was in charge of the backline. On the other hand, Adamantite Earth Demon Ijido was using earth magic to form a protective wall for the decoy frontline.

“How is your wall coming along?”

“Yeah, I’m all done here.”

Ijido answered Vikuto with a smirk.

After that, the Demon King came along.

“Have you all finished preparing?”

“Why if it isn’t His Majesty. Yes, we are all ready.”

The Demon King responded with a nod, before looking up towards the Eastern skies. Renarve, Vikuto and Ijido too, had their eyes pinned to the skies.

“By our fastest estimates, it should be arriving any time now.”

“Honestly, on the day that our Princess is coming back...”

“Speaking of which, she’s leaving for home today, isn’t she.”

“Indeed. We received her message last night.”

“.....”

“Your Majesty? Is something the matter?”

“No, only, I feel as though I have forgotten something, and yet...”

Once again, the Demon King fell into thought just as he did the time the guard interrupted. But once again, something interrupted him. This time however, that *something* was also the answer to his questions.

“!? We have a visual!”

Renarve spotted the incoming black mass and yelled to warn the troops.

“Is that it? ...Hm?”

“That’s... Don’t tell me...”

“*That* dragon!?”

“Hahh? The heck are you guys on about?”

Because the Demon King, Renarve and Vikuto were all familiar with that figure, they immediately guessed the situation. It was the Black Dragon that they had once battled in the dungeon known as the “Holy Land of the Evil God”. And if they considered Leonora’s homecoming plans, it was simple to guess what was happening. On the other hand, only Ijido was panicked from having no idea what was happening.

“Renarve-sama, Vikuto-sama, please give us the signal to attack!”

“W-, Wait a moment! You mustn’t attack!”

“Huh?”

“Riding that dragon is——”

The black shadow approached with incredible speed, and in no time transformed from a dot into a massive silhouette, and before long it easily crushed Ijido’s prided wall and landed with a boom.

The frontline soldiers hurriedly formed an arc before the dragon, but because their superiors had given no attack orders, they were standing there confused.

However, that confusion was met with Vikuto’s next line.

“——Princess Leonora!”

As though responding to his shout, a girl made herself visible from the blind spot on the Black Dragon’s back.

But unlike Vikuto’s words, that girl was not Leonora.

Naturally, everyone there had been looking at the Black Dragon.

And because of that, you could call it natural that everybody there turned to look at the girl.

The Demon King, Renarve, Vikuto, Ijido, everybody without exception looked at the girl. Or rather, they were forced to see her.

Glossy black hair, and a bewitching black rose dress. Light armour at her chest, and noble features on her face. Yet, what made far more of an impression were her eyes. Those black, murky eyes, so ominous that they caused hallucinations, were now overlooking everybody on scene, and gripping their hearts with terror.

It was *because* these troops were the elites of their race that they so deeply sensed her power. The Demon King had always been the strongest existence in their hearts. The mastodonian Black Dragon emitted an unbelievable sense of pressure. And yet the despair that the girl’s eyes elicited easily surpassed them both.

And the Demon King and his adjutants were no exception. Leaving Ijido aside, all the other members knew that this girl would be coming, and they knew from Leonora’s reports about the girl’s

mystic eyes. But although they knew, they still found themselves unable to suppress the instinctual horror that their bodies felt.

Given the circumstances, anybody faint of heart would have immediately fled in panic. The fact that they were not a single soldier less was worthy of praise.

But their strength of heart instead cornered them. Their minds were telling them not to run, but their instincts were telling them to flee. The contradictory born from this wore away at their minds.

And eventually, unable to bear with the terror any longer, all of them naturally took the same pose. It was a pose where they placed both hands and knees on the ground, and lowered their head to match; the posture of greatest apology, passed down since ancient times.

“O-, Oi, Anri!? You’ve forgotten to put your mask on!”

“.....Ah.”

Anri’s Mystic Eyes of Wicked Authority fully demonstrated the ‘average’ power that was capable of forcing a Demon King to dogeza.



Things started with some trouble, but Anri put on her mask, and the dogeza festival came to an end.

The gathered troops dispersed, the two girls were invited into the castle, and just as originally planned, they had dinner with the Demon King. The participants were Anri, Demon King Eligor, Leonora, and the Heavenly Generals Renarve and Vikuto.

Around that time, Ijido was busy repairing the damaged eastern grounds.

“Fumu, it seems that as long as one does not look directly at them, the eyes have no effect.”

“I’ve put a mask on, so there it’s all fine now.”

While drinking the soup from the full course menu, the Demon King

chatted with Anri. Because her mask was the type that covered only the eyes, there was no problem eating her food. The mask was an extraordinary item, designed so that although things were invisible from the outside, she could see clearly from within.

Because her mystic eyes only displayed an effect with eye contact, as long as she wore this mask, nobody would suddenly prostrate or run away from her.

“When you have that mask on, you seem just like a normal girl.”

“I *am* normal.”

“Heh. So a VIP of a thearchy who used to be an Evil God, and is *still* acquainted with the divines, is what you would call a normal girl, huh.”

Like this, the dinner continued peacefully as the Demon King and Anri enjoyed their chat together.

Around that time, Black Dragon Vardneel had begun to help Ijido fix the ground. Making use of his huge body, he stepped down on the ground to harden it.

“Speaking of which, there is something I must thank you for.”

“Thank me for?”

“Umu. It is about my daughter, Leonora.”

“Fath-! Your Majesty!?”

Leonora had been quietly eating dinner on the side when she panicked from the topic suddenly changing to her.

“I was unable to prepare Leonora any friends. Even if I ordered somebody to, they would only be a retainer. You could hardly call them a true friend.”

“Father...”

“I wished to thank you for becoming her friend.”

“It isn’t something to thank me for. I’m the one who asked.”

“Heh, is that how it was.”

The Demon Princess, the Demon King, and the girl who was once an Evil God.

Each of them had unique positions in the world, but for this moment, they were simply a girl, her father, and her friend who had come for dinner.

While this was happening, Ijido and Vardneel’s cooperation had somehow succeeded in restoring the eastern grounds.

It should be noted that though Anri’s mask was the best method of sealing her mystic eyes, nothing came without a price. In exchange for the powerful effect of its enchantment, it also came with a curse. Unlike the Tantou of the Wicked Demon, or the Black Clothes of the Evil God, it wasn’t as though she couldn’t take it off, but this mask—the Black Mask of Unsealing—had the annoying effect of unsealing the limiter on one’s emotions. To put it plainly, it made it difficult to control one’s feelings. Because of that, it had the result of blabbing out all sorts of things that one wouldn’t normally.

“I’m really glad that I met Leonora. I want to stay by her side forever.”

“A-, Anri!?”

“Muu... Isn’t that going a little far? Leonora is the heir to the throne, and so she must bear an heir, but...”

And so, although you would feel nothing about saying such things while the mask was on, the moment that you took it off, you would be assaulted with shame.

It was arranged for Anri to stay the night in the castle, but that evening she would end up writhing about atop her bed for quite a while.

Around that time, Ijido and Vardneel had begun to drink happily together.

“Umm, would it be all right if I asked a question?”

“What a coincidence, Renarve. I too had something to ask...”

Waiting for a break in the conversation, the previously silent Renarve and Vikuto suddenly spoke up together.

“Mn? What’s the matter, you two?”

The two of them were looking at Leonora’s chest together.

“W-, What’s with you two...?”

Because they were so openly staring at her, by reflex she covered her chest with the thing on her lap. But what they were staring at was not her bountiful breasts, but the thing that she used to cover it.

“”Why have you been holding that doll all this time?””

“Huh!? So I was! I’ve been carrying it all the time lately, so I forgot I even had it! Y-, You’re wrong... This isn’t by choice! There are some compelling circumstances behind this!”

What they were staring at was the doll that had been in Leonora’s hands, and that she was now using to hide her chest. Ever since she had returned here, she had always been carrying it around with her, so naturally passerbys had all noticed and wondered. Because of her status however, it wasn’t possible for them to casually ask her about it.

To be specific, the doll that she was carrying was the Symbol of Capture from the battle of three gods, the cursed Tena doll. Ever since she carelessly touched it, Anri had left the curse alone as punishment. Because she forgot about it and left the temple, afterwards it was harder for her to meet with the divine Anri, and the curse was never lifted.

“Fumu, I *did* tell you to find some more womanly hobbies but... is *that* your taste?”

“You’re wrong! You’re wrong, father!”

The cursed Tena doll was creepy no matter who you asked, and couldn’t be considered girly no matter what.

“Leonora’s become so fond of it that she won’t part from it.”

“Fumu, I see... But well, I will not do something as boorish as

commenting on my daughter's taste and past-times."

"I said that was wrong...! Or rather, Anri! This is nine-tenths *your* fault, isn't it!?"

The rumours of the doll-carrying Demon Princess had quickly spread through the demons' lands, and by this point it was already impossible to suppress the rumours.

And this was how the legend of the Doll Princess began.

Chapter 7 – A Certain Pope's Plans

The Holy Anri Thearchy.

A young religious nation formed from one of the corners of the Kingdom of Fortera, it had two national symbols.

The first was the temple-cum-dungeon, the “Holy Land of the Evil God”.

With five terranean floors and thirty-one subterranean floors, it was a massive labyrinth where each day, adventurers would risk their lives... risk their money.

Even following the conclusion of the Three Gods War, the number of challengers saw no end.

To begin with, a dungeon was a chance to get rich quickly for adventurers. Not only did this dungeons contain numerous treasures, if they defeated the dungeon master, further fame and fortune would result.

Naturally, high risk accompanied that high return, but this particular dungeon boasted safety so great that to date, not a single person had ever died there. At the same time, it was also the most difficult dungeon in the world.

As a result of the Gods of Light and Darkness ordering their respective races to conquer it, its fame or perhaps infamy had skyrocketed. Now, adventurers from across the world gathered to challenge it.

Of course, you could say that for the merchants and inn owners in the vicinity of the temple, this crowd was a group of suckers.

And so, the Holy Anri Thearchy whose main industry was tourism, continued to grow at an abnormal speed.

As for the other symbol—

“OHHH! Anri-sama! Our God! Please listen to our prayers!”

A blonde young man in luxurious vestments was kneeling in fervent prayer.

And the one he was praying to was the figure of the nation's patron god, Evil God Anri.

Indeed. 'Figure'. Not the person herself.

The man was kneeling in prayer before a statue of Evil God Anri. Because worshipping an idol was not outlawed in this nation, praying to a statue was not particularly strange. However, the problem was the size of the statue in question.

Its height rivalled that of the five story temple next to it.

A statue swiftly constructed in the Pope's zeal, the Giant Anri Statue.

Incidentally, it goes without saying but the man currently praying to the statue was the very Pope who constructed it.

Every morning and night, without fail, he would offer his prayers to this statue.

This statue was surrounded by a fence, and drawing near it was strictly forbidden. This was a direct order from Evil God Anri herself, and even the Pope was not permitted to approach the feet of the statue.

Because the Giant Anri Statue was based on Anri clad in her Black Rose Dress, standing at its feet would give them quite an eyeful.

Because the Pope had carefully reproduced even the finest details.

"Phew, any morning where I can pray to Anri-sama is a refreshing one. Huhu, building this statue was the right choice."

Wiping away his sweat, the Pope gave himself a thumbs up.

Like he said, the nations' reception of this statue was exceedingly positive. To begin with, the country was a gathering of devout worshippers, so they rejoiced at the construction of the statue, and even without this piety, the statue itself was brilliantly made.

It was so brilliantly made that a certain girl could no longer walk about unmasked.

"Now then..."

The one who had created the plans for this perfect statue was none other than the Pope, and now that the Giant Anri Statue was complete, it was time to move onto his other plans.

"It's time to bring the Grassroots Anri-sama Plan to the next stage."



“Aaannnnriiiiiisaaaamaaaaaa!!!”

Hearing the voice from outside, Anri unconsciously brought a hand to her brow.

There was no need to even guess who the man running her way was.

Rather, there could only be one person.

Perhaps because meeting with the divine Anri was difficult, at every matter the Pope would come rushing to report at the Black Rose Mansion.

Because he helped with the construction of this mansion, she would feel uncomfortable about being too cold with him and never turned him away, but it seemed that it mightn't have been the best decision.

“Pleaaseeeee haaaaaveeee aaaaaaa loooooookkkk!!!”

She could feel a headache forming.

His reports could be roughly grouped into three: the status of the country, the status of the missionary work, and then miscellaneous reports. Amongst these three, the last one was the root of the most problems, as she had painfully experienced herself.

And from how he was behaving now, it seemed that today's report would be one of the troubling ones.

“Please have a look, Anri-sama!”

Opening the doors and making himself seen, that was the very first thing he said.

“What's going on?”

Under her mask, Anri's face had cramped up, but she tried to sound as calm as she could.

“Huhuhu, it is finally ready! The main force behind the Grassroots Anri-sama Plan, the Miniature Anri Statue!”

With those words, the Pope produced a palm-sized sculpture. The design was the same as the dress-clad Giant Anri Statue, but

despite its small size the details were delicately reproduced. Truly splendid quality.

So high was its quality that any art enthusiasts in this world would have surely paid top price to obtain it.

But to Anri who had knowledge of another world, she could only see it as a figurine.

“How is it? Is it not splendid?”

“What exactly are you planning to do with this?”

The Pope had happily asked for her impressions, but she simply felt her face cramping up further.

“Naturally we will distribute one to every follower so that they may offer prayer whenever they want. In the future, I plan to have these sent beyond our borders as well.”

Finding that her hunch was dead-on, Anri shook her head and decided to stop his crazy plan early in its tracks.

Having a figurine of herself distributed to thousands, tens of thousands of people was nothing but a nightmare to her.

“I won’t all-...”

“The preparations are ready to produce a hundred a day. I suspect it will not be long before every believer has one.”

“You’re already at the mass-production stage!?”

Because it had progressed so much further than she had imagined, Anri let out a rare scream of shock.

But perhaps the Pope took her surprise to be pleasant surprise, because he smiled proudly.

“I cannot continue at such a snail’s pace. I must quickly prepare for manufacture of more designs...! Well then, please excuse me!”

“Wai-...”

With that declaration, the Pope left as quickly as he had come. Left behind, Anri could only let out a sigh of resignation.

Chapter 8 – A Certain Undying Butler

“.....Hahhh.”

On the fifth floor of the Evil God Temple, the divine Anri sighed. She then ran her finger along the window frame. There was dust. In a sense, you could call it the obvious result, but it didn't used to be dusty.

The reason it was now, was because the human Anri had left with Tena.

“This is a grave situation.”

Among the necessities of life, “clothing” was still okay. Because her Black Rose Dress would automatically clean itself at certain times, far from washing her clothing, she didn't even need to change it.

But “food” and “shelter” were different stories.

If you didn't make the food, you wouldn't have any. Unfortunately, Anri's cooking skills were not that great. Her food wasn't bad, but neither was it particularly good.

There was no need to even mention the other two gods here.

To begin with, members of the Divine Race sustained itself on faith, and did not need to eat like other beings. And because they neither needed to eat, nor were they capricious enough to learn on a whim, they had no cooking skills to speak of. There had to be some sort of drive or compulsion to obtain the skills to create something you didn't even need.

Which meant that there was no reason for them to eat, except for pleasure.

Naturally they wanted to eat delicious things for their enjoyment, but Tena who used to prepare it was now gone, so their meals had become heartbreaking. Of course, there was still the option of simply not eating, but now that they had tasted the joys of eating, it was a little hard to go back.

Not only that, Evil God Temple or not, if nobody cleaned it it would naturally become dusty. After Anri became a divine, she could use

brooms again now that she was free from her curse, but that didn't mean that she wouldn't stealthily escape when it came to cleaning the huge temple.

The living area of the Evil God Temple could only be said to comprise the 5th surface floor, and the 31st subterranean floor, but even those two alone formed quite a large area. Even Tena would have found it impossible to manage. So then how did they used to manage...? The answer was that it was because the place was still a dungeon. With the dungeon master skill, "Dungeon Create", it was possible to restore the place at the expense of mana. Although you couldn't say it was impossible to replicate this with a divine Authority, the Authorities had the disadvantage of being too powerful and difficult to moderate. After all, they were essentially abilities used to govern the world.

"The agenda of today's meeting is to address our falling living standards."

"Well, I do not mind, but..."

"I shouldn't be talkin', but dincha pick the wrong gods for this?"

Three gods sat around a circular table, beginning a ridiculous meeting.

"Well, gotta say, can't argue with improving the food 'ere. Your food ain't bad but, it ain't particularly good either."

"I agree with him."

Anri knew this herself, of course, but she did not find it amusing to have it told right to her face.

So she argued back.

"Deadbeats can't be choosers. Why don't *you two* make something then."

"Can't."

"It is impossible for me."

Anbaal and Sophia immediately rejected it.

Even Anri didn't think they had an atom of cooking skill. She just wanted to say it. Because of that, she backed down with a sigh.

"Well? What are we gunna do now? It ain't like I can't drag a few people who can do housework, back from the Demon Territory, but..."

"It may be best that you refrain from that. It may become a problem to have new humans and demons here."

"Ya think?"

"Yeah. After all, there's this strange situation where all three rulers of the world are bunking together here..."

Anri agreed with Sophia's words.

Very few people knew that Sophia and Anbaal were living at the Evil God Temple. If it was leaked to the world, other countries might even invade to secure the Thearchy for themselves.

"Which means," continued Anri, "that it's a matter of which one of the people living here can do housework."

Considering the purpose was to put a lid on inconvenient information, it naturally excluded the believers, foreigners, humans and demons from the third surface floor down, as well. Which naturally meant that their options were extremely limited. Once you excluded the trio who left the temple with the human Anri, the only candidates left were the dungeon bosses.

"Vnee."

"No way."

"With its large body... To begin with, it is quadrapedal."

They didn't even have staff to select from.

Of course there was no way the 20-metre long Black Dragon Vardneel could possibly do cooking and cleaning.

"The Anreal Armour."

"Still impossible."

“I must conclude the same way.”

It was the same for the 5-metre tall orichalcum living armour. It was a little better than Vardneel in that it was the right shape at least, but it really was too large for housework.

To begin with, it had no ego, so cooking and the like was impossible.

“...Imperial Death.”

“...Certainly, at least his size is of no complaint, but...”

“...Think he can do it?”

All that was left was the last boss of the dungeon.

Anri, Sophia and then Anbaal all thought of him in their minds.

There was no problem with his size because he was the same size as humans and demons.

His shape was fine too, since he was humanoid.

But then, as to whether they thought he could cook and clean, the three gods really had no idea.

“Anyway, let’s ask him.”

With those words, Anri decided to call Imperial Death there.



“Well then, please enjoy.”

“...Yeah.”

“...Yeh.”

“...I-, I shall partake.”

The three gods were overwhelmed by the sight before them.

Just looking at how carefully made the various dishes were, they already seemed delicious. That alone was a good thing, but it gave them a massive shock that all this was created by an undead who looked basically like a skeleton. Particularly shocked was Anri, whose heart was in shreds from realising that she lost to him.

“Yummy.”

“Pretty good.”

“Quite delicious, isn’t it.”

And the taste of the food did not betray its appearance.

“I am humbly overjoyed by your words.”

Imperial Death gave a bow, with refined movements that brought to mind a skilled butler.

Not only that, but from start to finish, all his attention focused on Anri. Although he served food to Sophia and Anbaal as well, that was nothing more than giving face to Anri. All of his loyalty belonged solely to Anri.

Considering his history, you could say it was admirable that he wasn’t simply attacking the God of Light.

“Please entrust the cleaning to me as well.”

With that, Imperial Death spread his arms towards an empty space in the room.

“Come forth, my kin.”

Responding to the summons of the Emperor of the Undead, numerous undead appeared on the spot.

“Now, my kin. Polish every nook and cranny of this corner. For the sake of Anri-sama.”

With those words, the undead produced brooms and dust cloths from who knows where, and paying no heed to the dumbfounded gods, immediately scattered to clean.

The large Evil God Temple was cleaned up at incredible speeds by the power of numbers.

Skeletons swept the floors with brooms. Wraiths cleaned the walls with cloths. The whole thing was just surreal to watch, but there was no problem with the results.

In less than a moment, the 5th surface floor and 31st subterranean floors were spotless, and now sparkled like they were newly built.

“How was it?” said Imperial Death proudly.

Anri could only nod up and down in a daze.

“Not only this. Allow me to also receive guests and pass messages along, manage your schedule, deal with the defence, deal with the finances, and all the other odd jobs.”

“I-, I see...”

Why was this lofty Undead Emperor showing off his housekeeping skills...? Or so she wondered in her heart, but Anri still nodded. Incidentally, the reason he was so desperate was because there was nothing to do in his job as the last boss.

“Well then, please keep up the good work.”

“Understood! I will serve you with all my body and soul!”

Keeping back his trembles of emotion, Imperial Death lowered his head politely and neatly, into a perfect bow.

This was the moment that Imperial Death, “31st Floor Boss” and “Butler”, was born.

Kitaseno Yunaki-sensei interviews Anri – Character Baton

Thank you as always for your support.
This is Kitaseno Yunaki.

It's a bit sudden, but I've been passed the Character Baton from Amano Hazama-sensei of 『The Simple Job of Being Destroyed By the Hero』 fame.

It's my first time being invited in this way, so there was the problem of "To begin with, what on earth is a Character Baton?", but since he went out of the way to nominate me, I decided to do it.

It seems that the other authors interview their main characters, but I'm not suited for that kind of role, so I'll stick to narrating, and entrust the interviewing to Miss Leonora.

"Hah? O-, Oi... Wait a moment!?"

Leonora was shocked by the sudden mission, but she was too late, and Kitaseno Yunaki had already disappeared like mist. In exchange, she could hear a voice from goodness knows where.

"Wha-!? You've already begun the narration!? Youuuu, it's only at times like these that you work fast! ...Well, whatever. Anri, you there?"

"You call?"

Leonora called out, and Anri suddenly appeared from somewhere.

"Umu, I'm reluctant, but since I was already entrusted with this, there is no choice. I am going to begin the interview."

"So bothersome..."

"I AM GO ING TO BE GIN!"

“Roger.”

Anri had responded sluggishly, but seeing Leonora smile with veins appearing on her forehead, Anri reluctantly accepted the interview.

1. Introductions

“Ahem! Well then, I suppose we should begin with your introduction.”

Pulling herself back together, Leonora asked the first question. Anri gave a nod in reply, and began to introduce herself.

“My name is Anri, 17 years old. I’m female, and I’m 158cm tall. Weight is a secret. Bloodtype AB.”

“What about your three sizes?”

“(――-――) Chudon.”

Leonora looked at Anri’s breast as she asked in teasing, but Anri paid her back with a darkness bullet. She added on a cute sounding “chudon” sound effect, but there was actually enough power to crush a boulder, so it was really not a laughing matter.

The darkness bullet flew towards Leonora’s chest, and after frantically dodging, she somehow managed to avoid it.

“Uwah!? A-, Are you trying to kill me!”

“Big tit girls are the target(teki).”

“Who’s a 『target(teki)』! At least say 『enemy(teki)』!”

2. Your preferred type

“Honestly... I knew this was going to be a difficult job from the start. Next is your preferred type, I guess.”

Leonora angrily remarked in a huff, but changing gears, she moved onto the next question.

“My preferred type?”

“Well, I suppose in this case it refers to your preference in the opposite sex. I haven’t heard any love gossip about you at all but... how is that?”

At Leonora’s act, Anri folded her arms and thought for a little.

...Rugged, older gentlemen? (shibui)

“Oh? How unexpected. Is there anybody in particular like that?”

Hearing the answer that Anri came to, Leonora smiled and asked in great interest. However, her question would lead to an unexpected disturbance.

“Ojisama I guess.”

In that moment, Leonora’s smile cramped. The reason being that there was only one person that Anri referred to as “Ojisama”.

“Huh? Wai-, Wait a moment! By Ojisama, you can’t mean...”

3. Things you like about yourself

“Oi, don’t just casually move onto the next question! The earlier topic was more important, right!”

Leonora tried to question Anri after her bombshell announcement, but tragically, it was time for the next question.

“Next question.”

“Tsk, it can’t be helped. I’ll have you tell me about this in detail later, you know. The next question is what you like about yourself.”

“Everything but eyes and aura.” (me to kehai igai)

Time taken to respond: 0.5 seconds

“T-, That sure was immediate...”

“It’s important after all.”

4. Things you’d like to change about yourself

“Eyes and aura.”

“Again with an immediate answer... Or rather, if you don’t let me ask you the question, I’ll lose my standing.”

At last, the time taken to respond had gone beyond zero, and ended up in the negatives. It wasn’t even an interview anymore.

“You should have known what my answer was the moment it became this question.”

“Well, that’s true, but...”

“Just how much hardship have I faced because of these eyes?”

Saying that, Anri pointed at them.

And here, Leonora made a mistake. Leonora had developed an anti-mystic eye physical skill and lately she basically avoided Anri’s gaze unconsciously, but since Anri didn’t normally point at her own eyes, Leonora reflexively looked at them.

In the next moment, Leonora bent her knees with flowing movements, and putting her hands together, she glued her forehead to the ground. In a word, the dogeza.

“Ah-, sorry.”

5. Name the next nominee

“I went through a horrible time again...”

“I’m sorry, I said.”

Leonora’s dogeza had already become standard.

“Well, I’m sad to say that I’m used to it already, though. Well? Who’s going to do it next?”

“I’ll pass it to the Narou Contest participant Emoto Mashimesa [『A Scandinavian Noble and His Raptor Wife’s Life as Hunters in the Land of Snow』](#)”

“Fumu, I see. Emoto-sensei who won a gold prize in the third Narou

contest, and whose book was recently published, right? Well then, Emoto-sensei, I've heard that it is fine to ignore these, but if possible, please continue to pass the baton."

"We're counting on you."

Credits

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